The Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia

Origins and Theory

Nevenko Bartulin

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The Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia

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Cover illustration: A stećak or medieval gravestone from Bosnia (near Sarajevo) with a carving of a swastika. Originally published in the Croatian mountaineering journal *Hrvatski planinar*, nos. 8–12, 1942. It is meant to represent Bosnia (which was considered the 'purest' Croatian region) and the idea of lineage (i.e. a gravestone), while the swastika represents the 'Aryan race' (Ustasha ideologists sought the racial origins of the Croats in Iran)

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INTRODUCTION

Apart from the Third Reich itself, no other Axis state has been condemned to villainy in such unequivocal terms by posterity as the Ustasha[1] Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH), which existed as a formal political entity within Axis Europe between 1941 and 1945 under the dictatorial rule of the *Poglavnik* (Leader) Ante Pavelić (1889–1959). The moral reprobation that accompanies the NDH in historiographical (and related political) discourses, in and outside of the present day Republic of Croatia,[2] is certainly not in proportion to the small political and military significance that the Ustasha state actually possessed during the Second World War. The NDH could not claim the military or political position of Axis countries such as Italy or even Romania and Hungary. The NDH was, however, the German Reich's closest ally in terms of its political-military structures, racial ideology and policies toward ethnic and racial minorities (albeit with considerable differences), and therein lies the historical significance of the Ustasha state. The NDH was in fact the last standing ally of National Socialist Germany in early May 1945.

The NDH was closely attached to Germany through the racial policies of the Ustasha regime. According to the general historiographical view of the NDH, the Ustasha government was 'the most brutal and most sanguinary satellite regime in the Axis sphere of influence.'[3] Yet, while the ethnic and racial *policies* of the Ustasha state toward Serbs, Jews and Gypsies in wartime Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina have received a great deal of attention in both Croatian and non-Croatian historiography,[4] historians

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[1] Ustasha (*Ustaša*) is the singular form, while Ustashe (*Ustaše*) is plural.

[2] For a recent discussion on the place of the NDH in modern Croatian historiography, politics and society, see Sabrina P. Ramet, 'The NDH—An Introduction', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 7, No. 4 (2006): 399–408.

[3] Ibid., 399.

[4] The Ustasha policies of deportation, mass killing and forced religious conversion in regard to the NDH's Serbs, Jews and Gypsies have been extensively documented. See Mark Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustaša Policy of Forced Religious Conversions, 1941–1942', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 83, No. 1 (2005): 71–115; Ivo Goldstein (and Slavko Goldstein), *Holokaust u Zagrebu* (Zagreb: Novi liber, 2001); Emily Greble, *Sarajevo, 1941–1945: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Hitler's Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Jonathan Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia, 1941–1942', *The Historical Journal*, 44, 4 (2001): 1015–1038;

continue to ignore, downplay or dismiss the importance of racial *theories* in the political, legal and cultural spheres of the NDH.[5] In recent years more historians have turned their interest to studying nationalism, fascism and race theory in European countries other than Germany,[6] but there is still a gaping historiographical hole as far as the NDH is concerned, particularly in regard to the question of Ustasha racial ideology. This book aims to fill that gap by analysing the ideas that actually lay at the heart of the Ustasha world view, ideas that were fundamentally concerned with questions of ethnolinguistic identity and origins (or ethnogenesis), racial anthropology and racial identity.

Ustasha racial ideas have received such little attention from historians because the whole phenomenon of the NDH has been traditionally analysed from a severely limited number of historiographical perspectives. As the Croatian historian Nada Kisić Kolanović has noted, two schools or 'models' came to dominate historiography on the Ustashe from 1945 to 1990.[7] One was the 'Marxist' model that dominated Croatian/Yugoslav historiography, reflected in the works of historians such as Bogdan Krizman and Fikreta Jelić Butić.[8] The Marxist Yugoslav approach defined the Ustasha NDH as an exclusively 'Nazi-Fascist' puppet state and, according

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Ladislaus Hory and Martin Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat, 1941–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1964); Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941–1945* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1977); Narcisa Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima: Jasenovac 1942* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni cvijet, 2003), Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1994), Holm Sundhaussen, 'Der Ustascha-Staat: Anatomie eines Herrschaftssystems', *Österreichische Osthefte*, No. 37 (1995): 521–532, and Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (California: Stanford University Press, 2001).

[5] Up until this point, the only works specifically dealing with racial theories in the NDH have been those written by the author of this book. See Nevenko Bartulin, *Honorary Aryans: National-Racial Identity and Protected Jews in the Independent State of Croatia* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2013); 'Intellectual Discourse on Race and Culture in Croatia 1900–1945', *Review of Croatian History*, 8, No. 1 (2012): 185–205; 'The Anti-Yugoslavist Narrative on Croatian Ethnolingustic and Racial Identity', *East Central Europe*, 39, Nos. 2–3 (2012): 331–356; and 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type: Racial Anthropology in the Independent State of Croatia', *Review of Croatian History*, 5, No. 1 (2009): 189–219.

[6] See, for example, Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) and Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling eds. *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe 1900–1940* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007).

[7] Nada Kisić Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 34, No. 3 (2002): 684.

[8] See the works by Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978), *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija* (Zagreb: Globus, 1980), and the two volume *Ustaše i Treći Reich* (Zagreb: Globus, 1983); and Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*.

to this historiographical school, 'any attempt to create an independent Croatian state was solely an act of Croatian chauvinism and the legitimising of terror on other peoples.'[9] The other historiographical school was the 'Nostalgic-Apologetic' model, which was articulated by anti-Yugoslav Croat intellectuals in the émigré journal *Hrvatska revija* ('Croatian Review', edited by the former Ustasha intellectual Vinko Nikolić). This model tended to downplay or ignore the racism and mass crimes of the Ustasha regime and sought to define the NDH almost solely as the 'historical realisation of an independent Croatian state.'[10]

During the same period (1945–1990), the few Western historians who dealt with the Ustashe tended to define the NDH through the paradigm of political Catholicism. In other words, the Ustasha regime (and indeed Croatian nationalism in general) was identified with radical clericalism (or 'clerico-fascism'). This interpretation was largely based on the widespread fallacy that a separate Croatian cultural and ethnic identity is founded almost exclusively upon adherence to Roman Catholicism.[11] The German historian Martin Broszat, who (in collaboration with the Hungarian journalist Ladislaus Hory) wrote the most comprehensive study of the NDH in a Western language prior to 1990—*Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941–1945* (Stuttgart, 1964)—also adopted the 'Catholic model' to define Ustasha ideology. Broszat thus referred to the Ustashe as 'the Catholic-Croatian type of fascism.'[12]

Since the collapse of communist Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, a great deal of scholarly work, unburdened by the ideologies of the Cold War, has appeared in and outside of Croatia on the NDH, especially on its political relations with other Axis countries, the NDH's internal political and military structures, as well as the political history of the Ustasha movement itself.[13] Yet, in their overall appraisal of the NDH, Croat and non-Croat historians are still hindered by outdated historiographical models.

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[9] Kisić Kolanović, 'Povijest NDH kao predmet istraživanja', 684–685.

[10] Ibid., 687.

[11] As the American-Croatian historian Ivo Banac points out, 'the ideologists of Croat nationhood, almost to the last practicing Catholics, resisted the equation of Catholicism and Croatdom.' Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, Politics, History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 108.

[12] Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 72. For highly biased views on the supposedly close link between the Ustasha regime and the Catholic Church, see Carlo Falconi, *The Silence of Pius XII*. Trans. Bernard Wall (London: Faber & Faber, 1970).

[13] Of particular note are the works by Mario Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret od nastanka do travnja 1941. godine* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2006), Nada Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i*

Western historians of the NDH, such as Jonathan Steinberg, Jonathan Gumz and, in particular, Rory Yeomans, have continued to equate the Ustashe with a rabid political Catholicism. For these historians the Croats are 'a community defined by religion and by almost nothing else' and therefore the Ustashe 'hated the [Orthodox] Serbs and so killed them';[14] or 'the Ustaša attempted to tie itself to Catholicism through using a dagger superimposed upon a Catholic crucifix as the movement's symbol' (though this claim is erroneous);[15] or more recently, the Ustashe were apparently driven by a Catholic derived religious 'mysticism', and the 'overtly apocalyptic, violent and chiliastic imagery the Ustashas employed reflected their extreme Manichean view of the world.'[16] To be sure, the Ustasha movement included a number of political Catholics or clericalists, and even a number of Catholic priests. However, these clericalists did not set the core ideological agenda of the movement and ended up subordinating their universalist Catholic principles to the tenets of ethnic-racial nationalism. The Ustasha party program, 'The Principles of the Ustasha Movement' (*Načela ustaškog pokreta*, 1933), did not contain *a single* reference to Catholicism, and only one solitary reference to religion (i.e. 'the moral strengths of the Croatian people lie in an orderly and religious family life').[17] Furthermore, the Ustashe conducted an openly Islamophile assimilationist policy aimed at integrating the Bosnian Muslims (or 'Croats of the Islamic faith') into the Croatian nation.

Other contemporary historians tend to view the Ustashe solely through the paradigms of integral nationalism and/or fascism and fascist collaboration, and without taking into consideration the racial ideas propagated by the NDH regime. Although he brings attention to the fact that Catholicism played a very minor role in Ustasha anti-Serbian measures, Mark Biondich views the Ustashe only as 'integral nationalists', worshippers of the 'cult

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Italija: Političke veze i diplomatski odnosi (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2001), and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*.

[14] Jonathan Steinberg, 'Types of Genocide? Croatians, Serbs, Jews, 1941–45.' In David Cesarani ed. *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 189–190.

[15] Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia', 1025.

[16] Rory Yeomans, 'Militant Women, Warrior Men and Revolutionary Personae: The New Ustasha Man and Woman in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941–1945', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 83, No. 4 (2005): 705–706.

[17] This statement is found in article 16 of the 'Ustasha principles' (which included 15 articles from 1933 to 1941, and then 17 from 1941 to 1945). See Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret*, 124–128.

of the state' and motivated by anti-Serbianism and anti-communism.[18] While the Ustashe could certainly be described as radical anti-communist integral nationalists (albeit motivated more by anti-Yugoslavism rather than anti-Serbianism), Biondich nevertheless downplays the importance of racial ideas for the Ustasha regime arguing, with little evidence, that the Ustashe 'never formulated' a coherent racial theory, since the regime's ideological 'racial undertone' was apparently 'implicit rather than explicit.'[19] Emily Greble, for her part, contends that, while the Ustasha principles 'described the Croat nation as an "identifiable ethnic unit" . . . the nation was identifiable only insofar as it was not "other" nations.' On that basis, Greble argues, 'a foreigner was somebody who was not a Croat, and a Croat was somebody who was not a foreigner—at best a political tautology and at worst a stage for national crisis.'[20]

Other leading historians of the NDH follow much the same line as Biondich and Greble, and view Ustasha racial ideas as a marginal aspect of the regime's ideology and/or a direct imitation of the ideology of the NDH's patron, National Socialist Germany. Ivo Goldstein thus defines Ustasha ideology as 'a specific synthesis of Fascist and Nazi elements' adapted to the particular Croatian sociopolitical environment.[21] Stanley Payne argues that the Ustashe claimed the Croats were racially of Gothic (Germanic) origin and therefore not on the same level as Slavs in the Nazi racial hierarchy.'[22] The thesis that the Ustashe promoted a specifically Germanic-Gothic racial identity is highly entrenched in historical studies dealing with the Ustashe. According to Sabrina Ramet, for example, 'the claim that Croats were "Goths" (whatever that might mean) rather than Slavs was one element in that ideology and provided an ideological groundwork for asserting that Croats (Goths) and Serbs (Slavs) were not related.'[23] James Sadkovich also maintains that the Ustashe 'began to develop a rather ambiguous racial theory that claimed a "gothic" ancestry for the Croats.'[24] In the most detailed English language study of the

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[18] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 77, 113.
[19] Ibid., 78.
[20] Greble, *Sarajevo, 1941–1945*, 97.
[21] Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 95.
[22] Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 405.
[23] Ramet, 'The NDH—An Introduction', 404.
[24] James J. Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism, 1927–1937* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1987), 150.

Ustasha state, the 2001 publication *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941–1945: Occupation and Collaboration*, the author, the late American historian Jozo Tomasevich, spent a mere paragraph on Ustasha race theory, also stating that 'many Ustashas, including Pavelić, believed that the Croatian people were not of Slavic, but of Gothic, origin.'[25]

Yet, as Mario Jareb has recently highlighted, the Ustashe did not actually propagate a specifically Gothic racial identity for the Croats in the NDH itself—even if Ante Pavelić claimed a Gothic origin in conversation with Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) in order to strengthen his ties with the Germans—and actually admitted that the Croats were of at least partially Slavic descent.[26] For Jareb, however, the recognition of a Slavic origin shows that the Ustashe could not therefore claim an Aryan racial identity. According to Jareb, the Slavic-speaking Croats were not counted as Aryan because the German National Socialists regarded the Slavs as 'racially less valuable.'[27] Similarly to Jareb, Yeshayahu Jelinek argued that the Ustasha idea of an Aryan Gothic (and/or Iranian) racial identity was 'for external consumption' only, in other words, a straightforward attempt to gain Nazi political sympathy.[28] Nada Kisić Kolanović, for her part, has recently begun to devote more attention to the question of race in Ustasha ideology (particularly with regard to the position of the Bosnian Muslims in the NDH), and she rightly points out that, 'from the perspective of its creators the NDH was a nation state in which . . . the Croatian nation was considered homogeneous by origin and race.'[29] However, she refrains from analysing Ustasha racial ideas in any great detail and argues that 'it is difficult to identify some sort of racial type of Ustasha nationalism', because the Ustashe also emphasised language, culture and history as key factors of Croatian nationhood.[30]

All of the preceding arguments are either misleading or very limited interpretations of important historical questions concerning race and the NDH. First of all, the Ustashe stressed race as a key factor of Croat

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[25] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 348.

[26] Mario Jareb, 'Jesu li Hrvati postali Goti? Odnos ustaša i vlasti Nezavisne Države Hrvatske prema neslavenskim teorijama o podrijetlu Hrvata', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 40, No. 3 (2008): 869–882.

[27] Ibid., 874–875, 881.

[28] Yeshayahu Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', *Nationalities Papers*, VIII, No. 2 (1984): 195–196.

[29] Nada Kisić Kolanović, '"Islamska varijanta" u morfologiji kulture NDH 1941.–1945.', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 39, No. 1 (2007): 94.

[30] Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam 1941.–1945.* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2009), 30–31.

national identity, which was no less important than other factors such as language, history and culture. Next, the claim that the Ustashe simply imitated Nazi racial theory does not take into consideration the strong influence that racial anthropology and race theory exerted on many segments of the political and academic culture of Croatia long before 1941, both during the period of *fin de siècle* Austria-Hungary and the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Finally, the argument that the Ustashe did not possess a domestic racial theory because the Croats are Slavic and therefore considered racially inferior by their German allies is an erroneous thesis because it overlooks the fact that 'Slav' and 'South Slav' (like 'Germanic' or 'West Germanic', and so on) are primarily linguistic, and not racial, terms and this fact was accepted, at least in theory, by German racial anthropologists and Nazi ideologists.[31]

In reality, the history of the concept of the 'Aryan race' is a highly complex one, and, as this book shows, it was entirely conceivable for Croatian nationalists to claim an Aryan (i.e. Indo-European/Indo-Germanic) racial identity; as regards the Gothic theory of Croat origins, the Ustashe never claimed that the Croats were actually Goths, but rather, that this Germanic people had significantly contributed to the Croatian ethnic and racial make-up. Furthermore, the National Socialist attitude toward the Slavic-speaking peoples was also highly complex, both in theory and in practice, and cannot be reduced to the simplistic argument that the Nazis adopted a universally 'anti-Slavic' racist position.[32] Regarded by the National Socialist regime as Germany's historical *Waffenbrüder* ('brothers-in-arms'), the Croats certainly occupied a far higher political and racial position in the 'New Europe' than the highly 'Mongolised' Russians for example.

Consequently, historians cannot disregard the question of Ustasha race theory with the argument that such racial ideas are too obviously fictitious or improvised and therefore not worthy of serious scholarly attention. As the German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) pointed out, and as this book makes clear, 'with race theories you can prove or disprove anything you want.'[33] Therefore, the race theory in the NDH that

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[31] See John Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs: From Racial Theory to Racist Practice', *Central European History*, 32, No. 1 (1999): 1–33. For more on the distinction between racial and linguistic identity, see Christopher M. Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005).

[32] See Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs.' On the problematic concept of 'Aryan' see Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 80–100.

[33] Cited in Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 1.

postulated that the main or leading core of the Croatian nation consisted of the Nordic-Dinaric descendants of a Slavic-Gothic-Iranian warrior ruling caste from the historic land of White Croatia is actually no more fanciful an idea than the equally racial, historically Yugoslavist, theory that Croats are of pure Slavic blood and thus of the same blood and origin as the Serbs and other South Slavs, and all because they speak more or less the same language. The Ustashe, for their part, had formulated a national 'ethno-history', that is, 'the subjective view of later generations of a given cultural unit of population of the experience of their real or presumed forebears.'[34] An ethno-history is based on a combination of 'varying degrees of documented fact' and 'political myth.'[35]

One could more easily 'prove' an ethnolinguistic or race theory when that theory was built upon an earlier ethnic myth and/or cultural tradition, for as the late American historian George L. Mosse argued, one needs 'tradition to activate thought or else it can not be activated.'[36] The Fascist leader Benito Mussolini (1883–1945), for example, found it difficult (albeit not impossible) to 'activate' an imported Aryan-Nordic racial theory, which had little or no influence on Italian nationalist thought prior to the mid-1930s. In other words, 'when Italian racism was introduced, it had to be invented and you get a crude transposition from the German Aryan man to the Mediterranean Aryan man.'[37] In contrast to Italian Fascism, the Ustashe did possess particular intellectual, ideological and cultural traditions to draw upon in the development of their own Aryan/Indo-European/Indo-Germanic racial theory. Ustasha racial ideas can thus be mainly traced to: 1) the anti-pan-Slavist writings and ideas of the 'father' of modern Croatian nationalism, Ante Starčević (1823–1896); and 2) the anthropological, sociological and cultural theories of the archaeologist Ćiro Truhelka (1865–1942), the geographer and geopolitical theorist Filip Lukas (1871–1958) and the sociologist Ivo Pilar (1874–1933). In turn, these (and other nationalist) thinkers were able to develop their racial ideas upon the basis of: a) ethnic myths or traditions derived from the Middle Ages (*origo gentis*), which traced a distinct Croat ethnogenesis to either the

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[34] Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 63.

[35] Political myths are 'stories told, and widely believed, about the heroic past that serves some collective need in the present and future.' See ibid.

[36] George L. Mosse, *Nazism: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978), 101.

[37] Ibid. For more on the Fascist racial elaboration of the terms 'Aryan', 'Mediterranean' and 'Italian', see Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*.

land of White Croatia (in present day south Poland) or to the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Dalmatia; b) Indo-European comparative linguistics, which could also define the Slavs as Aryan; c) racial anthropology, which identified the ancient or proto-Slavs as racially Nordic, while the contemporary Croats (and other South Slav speaking peoples) were classified as being of predominantly Dinaric racial type; and d) a sizeable body of scholarly research both in and outside of Croatia, dating back to the late eighteenth century, which derived the origins of the proto-Croats from a non-Slav Indo-Iranian and/or Germanic-Gothic ethnolinguistic group.

From their very beginnings as a political organisation in 1930 the Ustashe were open to racial ideas and theories. The principal political aim of the Ustasha movement was to establish an independent Croat nation state. This aim required the simultaneous destruction of the state of Yugoslavia, in which Croatia's distinct political and cultural identity had been threatened with extinction by the assimilationist policies of the Serbian dominated royal government in Belgrade.[38] The political aim of independent statehood was closely linked to the other equally important goal of the Ustashe, which was to redefine the very notion of Croat nationhood, which had traditionally been defined by most Croatian political movements as being purely Slavic from an ethnic and/or racial perspective. For the Ustashe, the Croats were both a distinct political nation (here defined as one possessing historic state right and a corresponding modern national consciousness),[39] and a distinct ethnic group or *Volk* (one defined as a group possessing or claiming a common ancestry, history, territory and culture).[40] In a racial sense, the Croats were considered a unique white

[38] There is a good deal of literature on the politics of the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. For works focusing on Croatia's position in Yugoslavia and nationalist responses to policies of Serbian centralism see Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia*, Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret* and Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*. For a different appraisal of interwar Yugoslav politics, see John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[39] A nation, as Holm Sundhaussen remarks, aspires to and claims political sovereignty, and possesses a national consciousness. See Holm Sundhaussen, 'Nationsbildung und Nationalismus im Donau-Balkan-Raum', *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, 48 (1993): 236.

[40] Anthony D. Smith defines the ethnie as 'named units of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories, elements of shared culture, some link with a historic territory and some measure of solidarity, at least among their elites'. See Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, 57. Smith argues that many modern nations can trace their origins to pre-modern *ethnies*. For views similar to Smith's on this question, see Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). For modernist views, which offer a very

Indo-European people that exhibited the physical and mental traits of the main European racial types (Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Mediterranean and East Baltic), while the best Croats specifically bore the traits of the 'exceptional' Dinaric and Nordic races. Accordingly, the Ustashe incorporated the arguments of Croatian (and other, mainly German) racial anthropologists and race theorists into their ideological definitions of Croat national and racial identity.

This book thus traces the intellectual and/or ideological origins, and the wartime articulation and propagation, of Ustasha ideas concerning, a) theories of ethnic and/or ethnolinguistic origins (ethnogenesis); b) racial anthropology, which postulates that human races possess distinct physical as well as mental/spiritual traits; and c) race theory, which presents a racial interpretation or philosophy of history and culture.[41] The racial ideas propagated in the NDH could be defined in their entirety as specifically racist if one accepts the defintion of racism as 'any theory or belief which asserted that one race was superior to another, or that cultural traits were the product of the biological characteristics of a population.'[42] To be sure, the NDH's race theorists, in general, did not explicitly promote the idea of racial superiority, but it was implicitly expressed, for example, in the notion that the Dinaric race possessed exceptional spiritual and physical traits. One could further define the race theory in the NDH as both 'racist' and 'racialist'; the basic distinction between the two is that 'whereas racialism emphasizes the decisive importance of *race*, racist ideology emphasizes the importance of *a particular race* . . .'[43]

In the first half of the twentieth century the distinctions between the study of ethnolinguistic origins, racial anthropology, race theory and racism in European cultural and political discourses were often blurred. In Nazi Germany after 1935, for example, German academics in the fields

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different perspective on the origins of national identity, see, for example, Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), and Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[41] There is an exhaustive literature on the topic of race, racial theories, the history of racial science, racism and all the controversies surrounding the question of race. I would recommend the following studies: Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1978), Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*. Trans. Edmund Howard (New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1974), and Pierre L. van den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter?', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1, No. 3 (1995): 357–368.

[42] Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 188.

[43] Alain de Benoist, 'What is Racism?' *Telos*, No. 114, Winter (1999): 22.

of racial anthropology, linguistics and genetics sharply distinguished between the linguistic term 'Aryan' and the racial term 'Nordic', but this did not stop the use of 'Aryan' as a broader racial-cultural appellation in the National Socialist state.[44] This same blurring of distinctions was also apparent in racial discourses in interwar Yugoslavia and the NDH. It is also important to note that the academic study of race and the ideological propagation of race theory in both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy was much more elaborate, influential and philosophical than it was in the NDH. Accordingly, there was considerable space and opportunity for the occurence of controversies, debates and points of divergence amongst German and Italian race theorists concerning, for example, the role of the Nordic race in history and culture, or the primacy of biological over spiritual racism or vice-versa.[45] The discussion on race in Croatia, however, was quite different to the debates taking place in Germany and Italy because Croat nationalist intellectuals and Ustasha ideologists were concerned with a far more straightforward matter than their counterparts in Germany and Italy. In other words, they wanted to prove—through racial anthropology and ethnogenesis—that the Croats were not racial 'Yugoslavs' but formed a separate ethnolinguistic nation of Indo-European origin. Accordingly, this book examines the intellectual and ideological continuities and similarities evident in the Croat discourses on race both before and during the NDH.

As this book highlights, Ustasha racial ideas evolved within the context of a dialectic of rival racial claims beginning in the late nineteenth century and extending to the fall of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1941. This dialectic pitted Ustasha racial ideas in ideological opposition to Yugoslavist and Greater Serbian racial-nationalist theories. Interestingly, there was some convergence between the racial theories of Croatian, Serbian and Yugoslav nationalists (notably in their common praise of the Dinaric racial type). During the 1930s Ustasha racial ideas also developed under the influence

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[44] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 89–100.

[45] In Germany, for example, there were debates between National Socialists advocating an exclusively Nordic racism and those who, whilst acknowledging the leading role of the Nordic race in European history and culture, also praised the achievements of other European races (such as the Dinaric and Alpine). See Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 113–169. Beginning in the mid-1930s, race theory in Italy was caught between the increasing political-ideological need on Mussolini's part to confirm the Aryan racial identity of the Italians, on the one hand, and upholding traditional Italian racial anthropology, which stressed the unique Mediterranean (Eurafrican) racial origin of the Italians, on the other. For more on the debate between Mediterraneanist and Nordicist racists in Italy, see Gillette, *Racial Theories in Italy*, 130–153.

of German racial theories. It should be pointed out, however, that German racial anthropology and National Socialist race theory had a marked influence on interwar academic and political life throughout central, eastern and south-eastern Europe. In this regard, Yugoslav and Greater Serbian racial theorists were also not immune to strong German intellectual and/or National Socialist ideological influence.[46] One of the individuals encountered in this book is the Slovenian born Croatian biologist Boris Zarnik (1883–1945); during the 1920s and 1930s Zarnik was a leading proponent of racial Yugoslavism, but he was also the main expert who ended up drafting the NDH's race laws in 1941.

Subsequently, this book examines in detail the actual period of the NDH, during which Ustasha ideologists and Croatian nationalist academics and intellectuals were able to openly propagate their racial ideas in the cultural sphere of the NDH, while the Ustasha regime legally defined the racial term 'Aryan', and constructed a state on the basis of a racial world view. This work does not specifically deal with the actual racial politics or policies of the Ustasha regime (except in the case of the Ustasha race laws and the question of religious conversions in the NDH), but rather, examines how the regime defined and constructed a unique Croatian racial identity, an ideal Aryan-Croatian racial type and also its racial Asiatic-Balkan counter-type; this countertype included the NDH's Jewish, Gypsy and (the greater part of its) Serb populations.

This book is not a history of the Ustasha movement and the NDH *per se*, but rather, an intellectual history of race and the construction of racial identity in Croatia stretching from the beginning of the first modern national movement in Croatia in the 1830s to the fall of the NDH in 1945. The Ustasha NDH represents the final historical stage of a specifically Croat type of racial theory and therefore forms the ultimate focus

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[46] Rory Yeomans, 'Of "Yugoslav Barbarians and Croatian Gentlemen Scholars: Nationalist Ideology and Racial Anthropology in Interwar Yugoslavia' in Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling, *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe 1900–1940* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), 83–102. Yeomans briefly examines Croat racial theory, but neglects to provide the proper historical context to the evolution of that theory. He thus argues that, 'in contrast to the technological and scientific pretensions of Yugoslav racial ideology, rooted in a belief in the Eastern Slavic messianic tradition, Croatian racial concepts were rooted in nineteenth-century ideas of nationalist exclusivity more common to the West.' See Yeomans, 'Of "Yugoslav Barbarians"', 102. It is not clear as to how 'a belief in the Eastern Slavic messianic tradition' could provide a basis for scientific racism, while it could also be argued that the idea of 'nationalist exclusivity' was far more common in Eastern, rather than Western, Europe (though Yeomans does not clarify what he means by 'nationalist exclusivity').

of the book, but the NDH's intellectual/ideological discourse on race cannot be understood without a thorough analysis of the racial theories that appeared long before 1941. This work thus examines an important element of Ustasha ideology and cultural politics but it is not a study of the Ustashe as a political movement.

Furthermore, the book does not deal with questions concerning genocide and/or ethnic cleansing in the NDH: this is a historiographical field that has been well traversed, though it still produces a good deal of controversy among Croatian (and other non-Croat, particularly Serbian) scholars, especially with regard to the number of people killed in the NDH.[47] In any case, when it comes to researching the policies of racial states such as the Third Reich and the NDH, one needs to distinguish between *race theory* and *racist practice*, for there was not always a direct link between the two in all circumstances. For example, wartime Nazi policies toward the various Slavic nations were generally contradictory and opportunistic in nature, and were based both on racial ideology and pragmatic political-military considerations.[48] The question of the link between racial ideology and racist policy in Europe in the Second World War is a highly complex one that falls outside the scope of this work. One should bear in mind the remarks made by Christian Promitzer on this topic:

> . . . the link between National Socialist "racial science" and their adherents in Southeastern Europe, on the one hand, and the Holocaust and genocide on the other one, should not be misinterpreted since the reality of concentration and extermination camps cannot be simply rationalised as a consequence of "racial" ideology.[49]

But if one is going to study the link between race theory and racist practice, in this case in the NDH, we first need to examine the origins and ideological basis of that theory.

Although this book analyses the connection between Ustasha and National Socialist race theories due to the significant ideological points of convergence between the two, it does not use the concept of generic

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[47] See Ramet, 'The NDH', 400.

[48] As Connelly points out, during the interwar period, there was an 'absence of any coordinated thinking' amongst Nazis on the issue of the Slavs. On the other hand, 'the question of racial ideology remains, for Poles and Russians were discriminated against in ways not dictated by the logic of wartime strategy, or the ultimate goals of living space.' Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', 9, 20. Also see Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 157–160.

[49] Christian Promitzer, 'The Body of the Other: "Racial Science" and Ethnic Minorities in the Balkans', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas*, 5 (München: Slavica Verlag Kovač, 2003), 37.

fascism to explain or contextualise Ustasha racial ideas. Theories of race appeared long before the emergence of historical fascism and were not necessarily an important or component part of all fascist ideologies and movements in Europe.[50] It is still a matter of academic debate as to whether National Socialism itself represents a particular national variant of generic fascism or is a political ideology *sui generis*.[51] More importantly, it is debatable as to whether the Ustashe could be described as a classically 'fascist' movement, particularly in terms of their sociopolitical origins. The proper historical context for understanding the formation of the Ustasha movement is the struggle between Croatian separatism and Serbian centralism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, while, in contrast, 'the experience of World War I was the most decisive immediate precondition for fascism' in other European countries.[52]

Martin Broszat defined the Ustashe as being only 'proto-fascist' or 'half-fascist.'[53] Stanley Payne pointed out that 'the murderousness of the Ustashi did not by itself qualify them to be considered generic fascists', because most 'large-scale killings' in the twentieth century were committed by 'Marxist-Leninists or nonfascist nationalists.'[54] Payne, however, offers a misleading picture of Ustasha ideology when he argues that the Ustashe did not appear to possess 'a vision of a categorically fascist-type revolution and a "new man" other than as a staunch Catholic peasant nationalist.'[55] In fact, the Ustashe did possess a revolutionary vision of a new Croatian man, that of a heroic warrior of Aryan blood. This book examines the NDH's 'new man' by focusing on his anthropological and ethnolinguistic traits as defined by Ustasha race theory. Ethnic-racial nationalism, rather than fascism *per se*, formed the basis of Ustasha ideology.

An explanation is required in reference to the use of terms such as 'Ustasha race theory' or 'Ustasha racial ideas.' To be sure, most of the Croatian intellectuals and academics who articulated racial theories or wrote on the subject of ethnogenesis and racial anthropology (either

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[50] George L. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution: Toward a General Theory of Fascism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1999), 35–36.

[51] On this topic see Richard Bessell ed. *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: Comparisons and Contrasts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[52] Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (London: Allen Lane, 2004), 28. Paxton describes the Ustashe as fascists. Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, 113–114.

[53] Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 177.

[54] Payne, *History of Fascism*, 411. For more on the argument that the Ustashe constituted a fascist movement, see Rory Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation: The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism, 1941–1945* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013).

[55] Payne, *History of Fascism*, 411.

before or after 1941) were not active supporters, or even members, of the Ustasha movement and regime. It should also be stressed that these intellectuals were not solely interested in the question of race, but, as this book highlights, included racial ideas within their overall theories of history, culture and politics. The one-party Ustasha state provided a degree of autonomy for intellectuals and artists in certain areas of culture and the arts, areas where the Ustasha government was unable or unwilling (more the former) to interfere too directly in cultural affairs.[56] Otherwise, the Ustasha movement itself was not a monolithic one in terms of ideology. Debate on some topics was permitted within certain ideological parameters. At times, some of the NDH's intellectuals could be quite critical of particular Ustasha policies; for example, Filip Lukas, a leading racial thinker in the NDH, criticised (privately) the Ustasha decision to declare war on Great Britain, along with the United States of America, on 14 December 1941, because, as 'Queen of the seas', Britain was destined to help shape the geopolitical future of the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas, including Croatia.[57] Differences of opinion on certain issues could not, however, mask the fact that an intellectual and ideological consensus was also reached in a few fundamental areas, one of which was the question of Croat ethnolinguistic and racial identity. The question of whether or not Filip Lukas was a firm believer in the NDH's alliance with the Third Reich—he remained loyal to the NDH until its fall—has really nothing to do with his conviction that race exerted a significant influence on the historical evolution of a particular nation's culture.

One could also refer to the example of Mladen Lorković (1909–1945), a leading pre-war Ustasha ideologist, Foreign Minister from 1941 to 1943 and Minister of Internal Affairs of the NDH from 1943 to 1945. He was executed sometime in April 1945 by radical Ustasha elements for having attempted, together with the NDH Minister for the Armed Forces, Ante Vokić, to hand political power over to the Croatian Peasant Party in August 1944. The Peasant Party was supposed to arrange the conditions for an armistice with the Western Allies, which would thus (it was hoped) preserve Croat state independence. Formerly one of the most prominent Germanophiles in the Ustasha government, by 1944 Lorković was convinced that Germany had lost the war and that the Ustashe had to let the

[56] Nada Kisić Kolanović, 'Komunizam u percepciji hrvatske nacionalističke inteligencije 1938–1945. godine', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 43, No. 1 (2011): 108.
[57] Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 118–119.

Peasant Party take power and even tried to convince Pavelić of the validity of such a course. This is the same individual who, in a diary entry dated 19 November 1941, noted that the Jews, like the Freemasons, were 'superfluous' from a cultural and economic perspective. Although the world had thought that one 'could not do without the Jews', it was obvious, Lorković remarked, that today one could do without them 'very well.'[58] Lorković never repudiated the Ustasha movement and ideology as such, but rather, in 1944, pragmatically felt that the time had come for the changing of the political guard.[59]

Both Lukas and Lorković had contributed greatly to the articulation of the idea of Croat national (ethnolinguistic) individuality. Admittedly, there were slight differences on certain matters pertaining to that overarching ideology. Thus, while many intellectuals and ideologists in the NDH argued in favour of the Iranian theory of the ethnolinguistic origins of the Croats, others advocated the Gothic theory and some even defended the pure Slavic theory. This fact does not, however, point to the existence of a fundamental intellectual disagreement over the subject of ethnic-racial identity in the NDH. In other words, these theories were actually complementary because they did not bring into question the racially Indo-European/Aryan origin and identity of the Croats.

One could further point to the fact that there were several Catholic intellectuals in the Ustasha movement, such as Ivan Oršanić (1904–1968), who had written articles criticising race theory in the interwar period. But as Višeslav Aralica points out, these Catholic nationalists 'tacitly or directly supported' the promulgation of the anti-Jewish race laws in the NDH because they were nevertheless anti-Semitic, albeit not of the racialist kind, but rather, traditional Christian anti-Semites. Although they 'rejected the theoretical meaning of race', these pro-Nazi Catholics accepted race theory as a 'useful instrument' in dealing with their 'political enemies' (i.e. the Jews).[60] One could cite more extreme examples, such

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[58] 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića' in Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković: Ministar urotnik* (Golden Marketing: Zagreb, 1998), 128.

[59] Kisić Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, 72–99.

[60] Višeslav Aralica, 'Što je nacija ustaškim intelektualcima?' In Tihomir Cipek and Josip Vrandečić eds. *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2007): 281–282. In an article from 1936 on 'Why is Marxism against Fascism', Oršanić pointed out that his frequent references to 'Jews and their negative influence' on society and politics were not motivated by anti-Semitism, 'which we generally consider [to be] a violation of dutiful Christian love.' Yet, in his article, Oršanić constantly refers to 'the Jews' collectively as an 'anational element', together with Freemasons and Marxists. Oršanić further defines

as that of the philosopher Julije Makanec (1904–1945), a supporter of the ideal of an independent Croat state, who went from writing in favour of liberalism and Christian egalitarianism in the interwar period to writing in defence of race theory and anti-Semitism in the NDH.[61]

It makes analytical sense to refer to the racial ideas propagated in the NDH as 'Ustasha' even if these ideas were articulated by a range of individuals with differing political preferences and backgrounds, and even if these ideas did not constitute a single official state theory. Aralica similarly argues that the term 'Ustasha intellectuals' is valid when referring to those Croat nationalist intellectuals who did not belong to the Ustasha movement but were active in the NDH's cultural and intellectual life, because

> If we understand the notion in its wider sense, and include in it all the intellectuals who, after the establishment of the NDH, devoted their work to the creation of the cultural politics of the new totalitarian state, then we are completely justified in including all the above mentioned individuals [such as Filip Lukas—N. B.] among the "Ustasha intellectuals"...[62]

A short note is also required on terminology. I refer to both ethnicity and race throughout the book, but the analytical emphasis is on race theory. In the NDH, as in the German Reich, 'people' (*Volk/narod*), 'blood' and 'race' were the key ideological terms and concepts; the people were a cultural community shaped by history, while blood and race referred to biological origins and physical type, as well as to psychological or 'spiritual' traits. Ethnicity and race were (are) not synonyms, but the theoretical line separating them was (is) often thin. For the purposes of this book, Pierre L. van den Berghe's theory on this question is analytically useful. According to his definition, both race and ethnicity are 'forms of extended kinship' based on a real or putative common descent, although ethnicity tends to place greater emphasis on cultural rather than physical

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'Hitlerism' as a racist reaction to the efforts of racial Jewry to establish international dominance through its leading role as a propagator of Marxism and Freemasonry. I. Oršanić, 'Zašto je marksizam protiv fašizma?' *Život,* 17, No. 2 (1936): 49, 53–55.

[61] On Makanec, see Enis Zebić, 'Julije Makanec—razumijevanje filozofije države i politike u radovima do 1941. godine', *Filozofska istraživanja*, 27, No. 1 (2007): 179–194.

[62] Aralica, 'Što je nacija ustaškim intelektualcima', 266. In practice, the NDH displayed more political features characteristic of an authoritarian, rather than a totalitarian, state. Filip Hameršak, 'O Matici, Hrvatskoj, fašizmu i historiografskom objašnjenju', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 42, No. 3 (2010): 865–896.

markers.[63] I make no attempt to analytically prove or disprove Van den Berghe's actual theory, rather his argument is useful insofar as it helps us to clarify Ustasha ideas on ethnicity and race.

Filip Lukas, for example, argued that the nation was a community based on blood or an 'ethno-biological type', and though all nations were the product of the mixing of different racial types, there also existed a dominant racial type that formed the 'core' of every nation; the nation or people also possesed a shared culture ('cultural kinship') and a shared past. The nation was thus a blood (racial) and cultural (ethnic) group. 'Kinship' is the key term in this discussion of race theory in the NDH, and in the Ustasha state (to cite Kisić Kolanović once again) the Croats were deemed 'homogeneous by origin and race.' In attempting to define both Aryan Croats and non-Aryans in the NDH, the Ustashe were hardly able to use consistent physical or biological markers to separate Croats from their racial 'Others' (except perhaps in the case of the predominantly dark-skinned Gypsies), notwithstanding the fact that the concept of an ideal racial (physical) type was important for the Ustasha regime. Therefore, ancestry or lineage played the most important role in distinguishing between Aryan and non-Aryan in the NDH. The notion of an 'ideal type' had been propagated by leading German race theorists, who 'utilized both Plato and modern sociology' in order to construct an ideal racial type: 'Not everyone possessed all the Aryan [i.e. Nordic] characteristics but all Aryans possessed at least some of them and together they formed an ideal type.'[64]

Lastly, the book's title is a translation of the German term *Rassengedanke* (literally 'racial thought' or 'racial thinking'), which was popular in the Third Reich, and can refer equally to race theory, racial anthropology and racialism/racism. The National Socialists understood their ideological relationship to the NDH to be based on the shared commitment to the 'racial idea.' A book published by the German SS (*Schutzstaffel*) on 'racial politics' referred to the political 'victory' of *Rassengedanke* through the promulgation of anti-Jewish race laws in several European countries,

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[63] Van den Berghe argues that, even when common descent or ancestry is shown to be largely a myth (as is the case with most ethnic groups), 'ethnicity or race cannot be invented or imagined out of nothing. It can be manipulated, used, exploited, stressed, fused or subdivided, but it must correlate with a pre-existing population bound by preferential endogamy and a common historical experience.' Van den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter?', 360–361.

[64] George L. Mosse, *The Culture of Western Europe: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1961), 360.

including Croatia.[65] In Berlin in November 1941, at his first meeting with the NDH's Foreign Minister Mladen Lorković, Adolf Hitler remarked that 'he was particularly happy to learn that the Croats were able to shift their development away from denominations and toward the racial idea, for after all the Christian and Mohammedan Croats were one race.'[66] It is the main purpose of this book to explore that historical 'development' in Croatia toward the racial idea, which reached its ideological apex in the NDH.

[65] Der Reichsführer SS, *Rassenpolitik* (Berlin: SS—Hauptamt, 1943), 12–14.

[66] Hitler cited in Vol. XIII, 'The War Years: June 23–December 11 1941', Series D (1937–1945), *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918–1945* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 866.

CHAPTER ONE

LANGUAGE AND RACE: CROATS, ILLYRIANS, SLAVS AND ARYANS

Introduction

In 1823 the poet and future author of the Croat national anthem, Antun Mihanović (1796–1861), wrote an essay in a Viennese journal in which he attempted to prove that the Slavic languages also belonged to the Indo-European linguistic family.[1] Mihanović spoke of the hope that the new science of Indo-European comparative philology would shed light on the origins of the Slavs, their languages and customs, 'for they say that a beautiful period is approaching, in which the night that has covered the prehistory of our race for thousands of years is finally being extinguished by the light that burns from India.'[2] Mihanović was dismayed (as were other Slav scholars) by the fact that the founders of Indo-European comparative philology had failed to include the Slavic tongues in the great European (or Aryan) family of languages. Mihanović posed the question as to 'whether we [Slavs] are allowed to hope that we will one day discover what our ancient ancestors thought, what they achieved . . . how they suffered, and how they mastered a difficult life?'[3] Similarly to so many other young Romantic scholars and writers throughout central, eastern and south-eastern Europe, Mihanović was fascinated by the European wide interest in distant linguistic and racial origins, stretching to antiquity and beyond.

The Indo-Europeans

The Indian light that Mihanović referred to had begun to illuminate European scholarship in the late eighteenth century when scholars such as the English Orientalist Sir William Jones (1746–1794) highlighted the existence of a linguistic relationship between the sacred language of

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[1] Radoslav Katičić, 'Mitovi naše poganske starine i Natko Nodilo', *Filologija* 44 (2005): 63–64.

[2] Cited in ibid., 64.

[3] Ibid., 63.

Vedic texts, Sanskrit, and Latin and Greek, as well as with the Germanic languages.[4] This scholarly discovery eventually led to the theory that India (or some other Central Asian region) was quite possibly the original birthplace of the white European peoples. No longer did the 'Semitic' Middle East represent the exclusive cultural and spiritual cradle of their civilisation.[5] The Sanskrit word 'Aryan' (from Sanskrit *ārya*, meaning 'noble') became popular during the course of the nineteenth century as a linguistic designation for the Indo-European, or Indo-Germanic, family of languages (including, apart from the Romanic and Germanic languages, the Slavic, Celtic, Baltic, Albanian, Armenian and Indo-Iranian languages) and, by association, as a racial term for the speakers of these languages. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars and popular writers in Europe often used the term Aryan to refer to the white Caucasian race, first identified by the German physiologist and anatomist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840).

Blumenbach divided humankind into five great branches: Caucasian, Mongolian, Malay, Ethiopian and American.[6] The German scientist was most impressed by the physical features of the Georgians of the Caucasus region.[7] Accordingly, Blumenbach 'gave to that variety [i.e. white men] the name of the Caucasian mountains because it is in that region that the finest race of men is to be found, the Georgian race.'[8] The skulls of the Georgians were 'beautifully shaped', while their skin was white, 'and this colour seems to have belonged originally to the human race.'[9] The Caucasian thus represented the ideal European type and the highest racial type of humankind.[10] Blumenbach did not, however, bring into question the fundamental unity of the human species.[11] As with other intellectuals and scientists of the Enlightenment, Blumenbach was seeking to define man's nature and his place within the natural world.[12] The new science of race was also influenced by the aestheticism of late eighteenth-century

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4 Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 83–84. Also see Helmuth von Glasenapp, *Brahma und Buddha: Die Religionen Indiens in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwickelung* (Berlin: Deutsche Buch-Gemeinschaft, 1926), 35.

5 Glasenapp, *Brahma und Buddha*, 5–14.

6 Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 5.

7 See Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (London: Pimlico, 1997), 734–735, and Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 173.

8 Cited in Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 173.

9 Ibid.

10 Davies, *Europe*, 734.

11 Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 173.

12 Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 2.

Europe, which found its physical ideal in the Classical Greek of harmonious proportions and handsome features.[13]

The French diplomat, historian and racial theorist, Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau (1816–1882), also referred to the white race as 'Aryan', but instead of India sought the origins of the Indo-Europeans among the Iranian peoples. Fascinated by the history of Persia, Gobineau argued that 'in very remote times the white race began to settle into its first home in the heights of Asia.'[14] From there the white race expanded into different branches, which settled, either in Europe (consisting of 'Celts, Thracians, Latins, Hellenes and Slavs') or in other parts of central Asia, namely in present day India and Iran, including the 'Hindus' and the people 'whom the Greeks called the Persians, but who still use the name Iranian for themselves.'[15] The name 'Irany', Gobineau wrote, 'is nothing other than "Ayrian" or "Aryan", which was the name common to all the white races at their origin.'[16] The German philologist Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900) wrote in 1871 that 'we are by nature Aryan, Indo-European, not Semitic: our spiritual kith and kin are to be found in India, Persia, Greece, Italy, Germany; not in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Palestine.'[17] Some years later, however, Müller was to cautiously point out that the linguistic term 'Aryan' was 'utterly inapplicable to race.'[18] All the same, 'Aryan' continued to be used by intellectuals, writers and political leaders as a wider cultural and racial term to define the European peoples, and especially in order to mark Europeans off from non-European races and peoples.[19]

In Europe itself, however, the term 'race' became increasingly attached to individual nations and languages: 'The *Homo Europaeus* about which the eighteenth-century anthropologists wrote would become the German, Slavic, or French race.'[20] European Romanticism in the nineteenth century had led to the founding of national movements based on linguistic affinity—pan-Germanism, pan-Slavism and so on.[21] The European peoples were thus divided into three main races (based on Indo-European linguistic

[13] Ibid.
[14] J. A. de Gobineau, *The World of the Persians*, John Gifford ed. (Genève: Editions Minerva S. A., 1971), 6.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Cited in Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 88.
[18] Cited in ibid., 89.
[19] Ibid., 84–89.
[20] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 34.
[21] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 84–87.

branches): the Germanic, Latin and Slavic. These linguistic 'races' were not characterised (or not necessarily marked) by distinct physical features, but rather by a distinct 'spirit' or soul, which found its ultimate expression in the mother tongue. Alongside the concept of race as a physical or anthropological category of humankind, there also existed the notion of the 'mystery of race', in other words race as a group of people characterised by inherited spiritual traits.[22] The term 'race' did not therefore refer solely to physical characteristics, but could be used as a synonym for an ethnolinguistic group and/or a nation: 'After a tortuous process of appropriation and refutation, race became—in addition to language, institutions, religion and cultural traditions—acknowledged as one of the "great elements of nationality."'[23]

The Slavs began to aquire the characteristics of a 'race' in intellectual discourse with the publication of Johann Gottfried von Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–91). To the traditional partition of Europe into North and South, Herder added 'Eastern Europe', which was home to the Slavs (who had historically been assigned to the North).[24] In Herder's work the Slavs acquired a unique history and peculiar traits: they were originally a peaceful and free people, but because of their obedient and docile nature the Slavs had ended up becoming the slaves of other peoples.[25] Nevertheless, Herder envisioned a bright future in which the Slavs would achieve their liberation.[26] Following Herder's lead, the French-Swiss Romantic writer Madame de Staël (1766–1817) emerged as one of the first thinkers to divide Europe into the three main 'racial' ethnolinguistic groups.[27] Although Mme de Staël believed that only the Latin and Germanic 'races' were truly European and civilised, she also hoped that the Slavs would develop something original rather than simply imitate the Latin and Germanic peoples.[28]

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[22] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 94.

[23] Marius Turda, '"Magyars: A Ruling Race": The Idea of National Superiority in Fin-de-Siècle Hungary', *European Review of History*, 10, No. 1 (2003); 7.

[24] Ezequiel Adamovsky, 'Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France 1810–1880', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77 (2005): 596.

[25] Ibid., 597.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

Pan-Slavism and the Illyrian Movement

The first Croatian national movement, the Illyrian, also equated race and nationality with language. According to the Illyrians, led by Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872), the Croats possessed a unique Slavic spirit (*Volksgeist*) that was intimately tied to their language. The Romantic concept of the people or *Volk* itself can be traced to 'the biblical notion of a people with its own language and territory as a lineage group descended from a single patriarch.'[29] The Illyrians called for Slavic cultural unity upon the basis of linguistic affinity, and it was their reading and interpretation of the cultural-linguistic ideas of German romantic scholars and thinkers, notably Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), which led them to adopt the ideology of pan-Slavism. The Illyrian movement emerged in Croatia in the 1830s with a political program that sought the preservation of Croatia's traditional autonomy within the Habsburg Monarchy, as well as the administrative unification of the Croat provinces within the Empire.

The Illyrian movement traced its more immediate intellectual roots to the 1790s, during which time the Croat nobility first resisted the attempts of the Hungarian parliament to introduce Magyar as the official language of the Hungarian kingdom, which included the associated Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia. Despite their inferior economic and political position in relation to the German and Hungarian speaking parts of the Empire, in the second half of the nineteenth century the Croats could still claim to be (alongside the Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Italians and Czechs) one of the so-called 'historic nations' of the Habsburg Monarchy.[30] The term 'historic nation' referred to all those peoples, or more precisely, to the nobilities of such peoples, which had a tradition of statehood dating from the Middle Ages. In contrast, the other ethnic groups of the Habsburg Empire, such as the Slovenes, Slovaks, Serbs and Romanians, were considered 'non-historic' peoples as they could not claim historic statehood and had no autonomous political life.[31]

Croatian historic state right was based on the legal-historical continuity of the medieval Kingdom of Croatia, preserved in the office of the *Ban* (viceroy) and the institution of the *Sabor* (parliament), long after Croatia's unification with the Kingdom of Hungary in 1102 and its incorporation

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[29] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 19.

[30] Branka Magaš, *Croatia Through History: The Making of a European State* (London: Saqi, 2007), 194.

[31] Ibid.

in the Habsburg Monarchy in 1527. The territorial boundaries of Croatia shifted considerably over the centuries, particularly during the early modern era when large parts of the historic Croat kingdom were conquered or acquired by the Ottoman and Venetian empires. The territory ruled by the Croatian *Ban* was gradually reduced to the area of northern Croatia known as 'Slavonia': the western part of this region became known as Civil Croatia, while the eastern part was referred to as Civil Slavonia. From the early sixteenth century onward the Habsburgs began to construct a Military Frontier (*Militärgrenze*) along the border with the Ottoman Empire, which separated Civil Croatia and Civil Slavonia. The nobility of Civil Croatia (*natio croatica* or the Croat 'political nation') regarded itself as the direct and rightful heir to the medieval Croatian kingdom and its former lands, including Dalmatia, the Military Frontier, parts of Ottoman Bosnia and Herzegovina (the parts known as 'Turkish Croatia' and 'Turkish Dalmatia') and the eastern Istrian peninsula.[32] Dalmatia and Istria became Austrian provinces in 1815 but remained administratively separated from northern Croatia-Slavonia (which was in union with the Kingdom of Hungary) until 1918. Nevertheless, the historical political unity of the Croat lands was reflected in the collective royal title of the Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia (*Regna Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*).[33]

Apart from their main political aim of uniting the historic Croat provinces, the Illyrians also wanted to create a unified standard literary language (based on the *štokavian* dialect) for all South Slavs.[34] The Illyrians introduced the idea of 'Slavic reciprocity' to modern Croatian political culture, which, alongside historic state right, represented the most important concept of Croatian politics in the nineteenth century.[35] According to Gaj, the Croats actually 'belonged to three nationalities: the Croats, the Illyrians and the Slavs.'[36] Gaj regarded the Croats and the other South Slavs as the direct descendants of the ancient Illyrians (who had supposedly been Slavs). The idea of an autochthonous Slavic presence in the western Balkans can be traced to the fanciful genealogies of

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[32] 'Turkish Croatia' (north-west Bosnia) and 'Turkish Dalmatia' (western Herzegovina) extended to the Vrbas and Neretva Rivers. See Nikša Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Barbat, 2002), 95–96.

[33] Elinor Murray Despalatovic, *Ljudevit Gaj and the Illyrian Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 6.

[34] Ibid., 2.

[35] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 70–79.

[36] Despalatovic, *Ljudevit Gaj*, 90–91, 110.

Croatian Renaissance writers, who had been keen to stress the antiquity of Croatian/Slavic settlement in Dalmatia.[37] Gaj believed that the historical name 'Illyrian' could unite the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes and other South Slavs under a 'neutral' name, which would not threaten any group's individual identity.[38] In the choice of the national appellation Gaj was also influenced by the classification of Slavic languages as categorised by the founders of cultural pan-Slavism, the Slovak poet Ján Kollár (1793–1852) and his compatriot, the scholar Pavel Josef Šafarík (1795–1861).[39] Although Gaj eventually accepted the fact that the Slavs were not the direct descendants of the Illyrians, the theory of an autochthonous Slav people in the western Balkans would continue to form a component part of the Illyrian ideology; this theory was thus propagated in Croatian newspapers during the revolutionary years of 1848/49, when the Croatian and Hungarian national movements clashed openly for the first time.[40]

The idea of Slav antiquity in the western Balkans was needed in the struggle against the nationalist Hungarian Liberal Party, which called for the modernisation and centralisation of the Hungarian kingdom. Such a policy would have significantly curtailed Croatia's traditional municipal autonomy. In response to the Hungarian nationalist belittlement of Croatia's autonomous traditions, the theory of Balkan-Slav antiquity was intended to prove 'the historical continuity of Croats in the areas they settled, [and] their individuality', and also to stress 'the value of Illyrian-Croatian culture and tradition and affiliation to the European civilisational circle.'[41] For Gaj and the Illyrianists, language was the key factor that linked the Croats (and other Slavs) to European civilisation. The Hungarians on the other hand spoke an 'Asiatic' (i.e. Finno-Ugric) tongue. According to the Illyrians, the Magyars could not, as the presumed descendants of the Huns and Avars, boast an Indo-European ethnolinguistic heritage like the Croats, thus placing Hungary outside of the European family of truly 'civilised' nations. During the early nineteenth century the Hungarian lower nobility itself began to propagate the theory

[37] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 71.

[38] Ibid., 76.

[39] According to Kollár, the Slav dialects were Polish, Russian, Czecho-Slovak and Illyrian, while Šafarík distinguished between Northeastern Slavs (Czechs and Poles) and Southeastern Slavs (Russians and Illyrians). Despalatovic, *Ljudevit Gaj*, 87.

[40] Arijana Kolak, 'Između Europe i Azije: Hrvati i Mađari u propagandnom ratu 1848/49', *Povijesni prilozi*, 34, No. 34 (2008): 184–185.

[41] Ibid., 184.

of the Hun origin of the Magyars (a theory partly based on medieval traditions that derived the origins of the Hungarian kings from Attila, King of the Huns).[42] According to this theory, the Hungarians had a right to rule over the non-Magyar peoples (Slovaks, Serbs, Romanians and Croats) of the Hungarian kingdom because they were the direct descendants of the Huns who conquered the Carpathian basin and established the first Hungarian state.[43] Magyar notions of political supremacy were based on the notion of historic rights, which were in turn based upon the right of conquest.[44]

On the other hand, in order to prove that the Hungarians properly belonged to the Asiatic world, Croatian writers and intellectuals of the day looked to the 'new discoveries of European scientists from various fields, particularly to discoveries in biology, anthropology, linguistics and Oriental studies.'[45] Croatia's intellectual milieu was influenced by the work of the Slovak politician and poet L'udovit Štúr (1815–1856). On the basis of the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), Štúr made a distinction between 'historic' and 'non-historic' peoples: the former belonged to the Indo-European and Semitic ethnolinguistic branches, while the latter were part of the Asiatic branch, including the Hungarians.[46] Two articles in the Illyrianist newspaper *Slavenski jug* ('The Slavic South') from August 1848 declared that the Magyars were 'kinfolk of the Mongols', while the Croats 'already had civic and political freedom when the Magyars were still living like nomads on the Asiatic plains, and so had no idea about political freedom, still less [any idea] how to construct a state.'[47] Another article in *Slavenski jug* in November of the same year stated that one of the main Asiatic traits that the Magyars inherited biologically from the Huns and Mongols was Asiatic cruelty: 'The Magyars do not conceal their Hunnish descent, they do not conceal that they are sons of Attila, from whom they inherited the right to suppress other peoples.'[48]

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[42] Ibid., 181–182. Also see Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians: 1000 Years of Victory in Defeat* (London: Hurst & Company, 1999), 12–26.

[43] Kolak, 'Između Europe i Azije', 182.

[44] Turda, 'The Magyars: A Ruling Race', 16.

[45] Kolak, 'Između Europe i Azije', 185. To be sure, many educated Croats also felt that Catholic Hungary belonged to the family of civilised European nations. See Kolak, 'Između Europe i Azije', 192.

[46] Ibid., 16fn, 178–179.

[47] Cited in ibid., 185.

[48] Cited in ibid., 186.

Whilst the Hungarians were defined as Asiatic, the Serbs and other South Slavs were identified as racial brethren. The Illyrians failed, however, in their endeavour to create an Illyrian or South Slav 'cultural nation' (*Sprachnation*). In contrast to their expectations, the greater part of the Serb and Slovene cultural elites thoroughly rejected the idea of Illyrianism as too 'Croatian.'[49] In any case, the semi-independent Principality of Serbia was pursuing its own national aims, the foremost of which was 'the "liberation and unification" of all Serbs into a single Great Serbian state.'[50] Serbian scholars, notably Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), also promoted the view that the South Slav dialect of *štokavian*, spoken by (most) Croats and (almost all) Serbs, was a purely Serbian dialect; *štokavian* speaking Croats were therefore 'Roman Catholic Serbs.' This theory had earlier been proposed by Kollár and Šafařík, as well as by the German scholar August Ludwig von Schlözer (1735–1809). Alongside a traditional religious definition of Serb nationhood (i.e. Serb-Orthodox) Karadžić had also provided an ethnolinguistic one.[51]

Yugoslavism and the Serbs of Croatia

Despite Illyrian political failures, their ideological successors, the Yugoslavists, continued to enthusiastically promote the cause of pan-Slavism and 'South-Slavism' ('Yugo-slavism'/*jugoslovjenstvo*). Following in the footsteps of the Illyrian movement, the Yugoslavist National Party, headed by the Catholic Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905) in Croatia-Slavonia, adhered to the idea of 'political Croatism' and 'cultural Yugoslavism.'[52] According to this theory, the Croats belonged to the South Slav/Yugoslav 'nation' and Slavic 'race' in an ethnolinguistic, racial and cultural sense, but were a separate nation on the grounds of their political tradition (i.e. Croat historic state right). Strossmayer adhered to a romantic Herderian view of national identity, according to which both the Croats and Serbs shared the same Slavic *Volksgeist* because they spoke more or less the same language.[53] Strossmayer's Yugoslavism was generally 'Austro-Slavic' from a political perspective, because its main aim was

[49] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 78.
[50] Ibid., 83.
[51] Ibid., 80–81.
[52] Ibid., 89–91.
[53] Mirjana Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies from the End of Illyrism to the Creation of Yugoslavia', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 15–16 (1979–1980): 7.

to realise South Slav unity within the Triune Kingdom and secure the cooperation of all Slavs in a federalised Habsburg Monarchy.[54]

Yugoslavist nationalism also rested on the concept of the Indo-European and/or Aryan race. The leading Croat historian and Yugoslavist politician from Dalmatia, Natko Nodilo (1834–1912), emphasised the Indo-European heritage of the Croats in order to strengthen the national rights of Dalmatian Croat nationalists struggling for Croat/Slav linguistic and cultural equality with the Italian speaking elites in the Dalmatian towns. The Dalmatian Croat nationalists also called for the administrative unification between Austrian-ruled Dalmatia and Hungarian-affiliated Croatia-Slavonia. In 1862 Nodilo outlined the program of the Dalmatian Nationalists in Zadar: 'the Dalmatian Slavs, noble according to their pure Indo-European origin, from which all the great civilised nations have emerged . . . take in hand the unwritten right of the free development of their nationality.'[55]

Nodilo was keen to prove that the Slavs (in particular, Serbs and Croats) possessed a pagan mythology comparable to the other Indo-European peoples. Between 1885 and 1890 Nodilo completed a ten-volume work entitled *Stara vjera Srba i Hrvata* ('The Old Religion of the Serbs and Croats').[56] In his opening paragraph Nodilo asked whether, 'there are myths or divine prophesies among the Serbs and Croats? If we ask the most renowned foreign mythologists, there are not. The creators of legends are Indians and Iranians, Hellenes and Teutons; but the Celts, Latins and Slavs are not.'[57] Nevertheless, Nodilo attempted to trace the pagan religious heritage of the Croats and Serbs by studying the myths and beliefs of Croatian and Serbian folklore. As Nodilo argued, 'among the Aryan peoples, it might well be that the Serbs and Croats, alongside the Hellenes, Persians and Indians, are the most gifted with poetic sensibilities', and the Serbs and Croats were, 'according to customs, the purest among the Slavs.'[58]

The Yugoslavists could not clarify with precision as to which people they actually represented, for the words 'people/nation' (*narod*) and 'tribe' (*pleme*) were used synonymously to describe the Croats, South Slavs and

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[54] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 90.

[55] 'Program *Narodnog lista*: Program pristaša Narodne stranke u Dalmaciji (Zadar 1862.).' In Tihomir Cipek and Stjepan Matković eds. *Programatski dokumenti hrvatskih političkih stranaka i skupina 1842–1914* (Zagreb: Disput, 2006), 143.

[56] Natko Nodilo, *Stara vjera Srba i Hrvata* ([1885–1890] Split: Logos, 1981).

[57] Ibid., 43.

[58] Ibid., 45, 47.

the Slavs in general.[59] At the heart of such intellectual confusion was the nature of the ethnic and linguistic relationship between the Croats and their closest South Slav neighbours, the Serbs, particularly those who lived in Croatia itself. By the late nineteenth century, the majority of the Triune Kingdom's Orthodox Serbs (who constituted 25% of the population of Croatia-Slavonia and 17% of Dalmatia—along with 43% of Bosnia-Herzegovina's population)[60] had accepted a Serbian national consciousness. Most Croatian Serbs were descendants of Orthodox refugees (including Serbs, Vlachs and other Orthodox Balkan inhabitants) who fled to Croatia or were resettled there by the Ottomans or Habsburgs in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in the wake of the Ottoman invasions.[61] The majority of these Orthodox refugees—collectively referred to as 'Vlachs' by the Habsburg authorities and local population—were organised as peasant military colonists in the Military Frontier/*Vojna Krajina*/*Militärgrenze*, where they were granted religious autonomy. The Military Frontier was a defensive zone designed to act as a buffer against the Ottoman Empire, which also organised groups of Vlachs as military colonists on its side of the border, known as *martolosi*.[62] The Vlachs themselves are an ancient pastoral Balkan people most probably descended from the Illyrian and other autochthonous tribes of the Balkans, which were first Latinised under Roman rule and then (mostly) Slavicised during later centuries.[63]

Under the influence of Serbian Orthodox confessional schools in Croatia, the Orthodox *Grenzer* came to espouse a national Serb identity.[64] The Frontier was neither a Serbian nor an Orthodox entity (as it was also home to Catholic Croat soldiers and Austrian-German officers), but it did end up institutionally separating the majority of Croatia's Serbs from the rest of the Croat population.[65] The unification of the Military

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[59] Gross, 'Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies, 12–13.

[60] Nicholas J. Miller, *Between Nation and State: Serbian Politics in Croatia before the First World War* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 18, 29–30.

[61] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 42–44.

[62] See chapter six, 'Serbs and Vlachs' in Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1996), 70–81.

[63] See ibid. and Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 42–45.

[64] See Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 21–22 and Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam*, 120–121.

[65] Miller, *Between Nation and State*, 8.

Frontier with the Triune Kingdom in 1881 greatly increased Serbian influence in Croatian political life.[66] The political leaders of Croatia's Serbs were adamantly opposed to assimilation into the Croat 'political nation' or, for that matter, into some amorphous Yugoslav nationality. This was in line with the main aim of the Serbian Orthodox Church authorities in Habsburg Croatia, which was to preserve Serbian 'nationality, religion and alphabet.'[67]

Conclusion

As Branka Magaš argues, 'it was clear by the start of the 1860s that Serb national aspirations could not be accommodated within the concept of a single, albeit pluralist, Croatian nation.'[68] In order to appease those aspirations, the Croatian *Sabor* adopted a resolution in 1861 formally declaring 'that the Triune Kingdom recognises the Serb people living within its borders as one with—and equal to—the Croat people.'[69] This resolution was passed by a *Sabor* dominated by Yugoslavist Croat representatives, who did not seem to see the contradiction between recognising a separate Serbian people within the Croatian kingdom and their equally fervent conviction that those same Serbs were ethnically one and the same nation with Croats. At the same time, the Croat Yugoslavists were determined in their defence of Croatian historic state right, which meant that, though they accepted the existence of Serbs in Croatia, they did not accept the existence of a separate Serb 'political nation' within the Triune Kingdom.[70]

The Croat pan-Slavists/Yugoslavists actually denied the distinct ethnocultural identity of the Croats because they had promoted the 'authenticity' of the South Slav nation and Slavic race, and 'to say that an *ethnie* lacks an authentic culture and ethno-history is to deny its claim to national recognition.'[71] The Croat pan-Slavists and Yugoslavists had asserted the antiquity of Slavic-Croatian settlement and culture in the western Balkans

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66 Magaš, *Croatia Through History*, 346.
67 Charles Jelavich, *South Slav Nationalisms: Textbooks and Yugoslav Union Before 1914* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990), 46.
68 Magaš, *Croatia Through History*, 339.
69 Cited in ibid., 341.
70 Ibid., 339–344.
71 Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, 66.

in answer to the expansionist tendencies of the non-Slavic Hungarians, Italians and Austrian-Germans, but they did not develop a national idea of *Croat* authenticity in relation to the Slavic speaking Serbs and their assimilationist notion of a 'Greater Serbia.' The task of formulating an exclusively Croatian sense of national authenticity would be taken up in the 1850s by the former Illyrian writer and philosophy student Ante Starčević.

CHAPTER TWO

ANTE STARČEVIĆ: HISTORIC STATE RIGHT AND CROAT BLOOD

Introduction

Ante Starčević was born of a Catholic father and an Orthodox mother in the region of Lika in the Military Frontier in central Croatia. He is still considered by many non-Croat historians to be the father of modern exclusive Croatian nationalism.[1] The Ustasha movement, for its part, considered Starčević and the party he founded in 1861, the Croatian Party of Right (*Hrvatska stranka prava*, HSP), as its direct ideological predecessor. Starčević was adamantly opposed to Yugoslavism and his ultimate aim was the establishment of an independent Croatian state (outside of the Habsburg Monarchy), but his political ideas were quite different in certain key areas to those of the Ustashe. Starčević was, for example, devoted to the democratic ideals of the French Revolution and possessed a deep contempt for German-Austrians and German culture in general. Croatian historians are therefore right in arguing that the Ustashe misconstrued much of Starčević's ideology to suit their exclusivist and totalitarian agenda.[2] However, while there is no doubt that the Ustashe wilfully misinterpreted many of Starčević's ideas and writings to legitimise their politics, Starčević's ideas on nation and 'race' did exert a marked influence on Ustasha racial nationalism.

The Slavoserbs and the Vlach Question

Alongside his demand for full Croatian independence from both Austria and Hungary, Starčević was also an avid opponent of pan-Slavism in any form. According to Starčević, notions of Slavic reciprocity were 'empty words, because for those dreams without any content, there is no basis

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[1] See, for example, Gumz, 'Wehrmacht Perceptions of Mass Violence in Croatia', 1025, and Srdjan Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism', *East European Quarterly*, XXVI, No. 3 (1992): 365.

[2] See Jelić Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska,* 23 and Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 90.

in history, no reason in the present, and no perspective in the future.'[3] Pan-Slavism was 'barbarism' and a threat to European civilisation.[4] In Starčević's eyes, Slavic barbarism was linked to the slave-like nature of the Slavs. Although committed to the ideals of the French Revolution, Starčević departed from the idea of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' in one important respect. In line with the Aristotelian justification of slavery, according to which certain individuals and peoples ('barbarians') were slaves by nature, Starčević developed the idea that there were similar 'slaves' in his time: these were people who were unfit for democratic life because they did not understand true freedom and the needs of the nation.[5] In this respect, Starčević was first and foremost thinking of those Croats who 'served' foreign powers and ideologies, whether Austria, Hungary or pan-Slavism. Starčević referred to these 'slaves' as *Slavoserbs*, a term previously used by Ján Kollár. In contrast to Kollár, Starčević gave this name a negative connotation, deriving the words 'Slav' and 'Serb' from the Latin words *sclavus* and *servus*, both meaning 'slave.'[6] An etymological association between 'Slav' and 'slave' had also been made in Western European languages.[7]

Starčević divided the *Slavoserbs* into five categories: the first consisted of a people of 'impure breed' discovered in Thrace by Aristotle; the next two categories consisted of the intelligentsia and those Croats who had sold out their country for money; the fourth category was made up of foreigners who could not speak Croatian, while the fifth group was a collection of people who simply followed whatever the majority thought and said.[8] Starčević identified the first category with the Serbs and the nomadic Balkan population (i.e. Vlachs).[9] In his 1876 essay, *Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj* ('The Slavoserb Breed in Croatia'), Starčević recounted the arrival of the nomadic Orthodox Vlachs into Croatian lands during the Ottoman invasions and their perceived propensity for looting, murder and other criminal deeds. According to Starčević, these Vlachs

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[3] Ante Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu? Dva razgovora.' In *Djela dra. Ante Starčevića*, Josip Bratulić ed. (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995): 6.

[4] Ibid., 17.

[5] Mirjana Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo: Ideologija, agitacija, pokret* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 2000), 18.

[6] Ibid., 221, 230. Also see Wolf Dietrich Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten 1830–1914: Analyse und Typologie der nationalen Ideologie* (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1980), 182.

[7] Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 17.

[8] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 249–250.

[9] Ibid., 341.

were intermingled with Gypsies and together they had served the invading Ottoman armies.[10]

In Starčević's eyes, the Serbs were a *pasmina* ('breed') but not a people or nation, because they were a nomadic group of heterogeneous origin that was bereft of spiritual values and had little or no concept of land ownership, which promoted human dignity, love for home and law; furthermore, they had served various rulers and even assimilated into different cultures.[11] The Serbs had also been exposed to the corrupt Greek spirit, which was inferior to the Roman spirit. This old struggle between Greek and Roman cultures was reflected somewhat in the split between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.[12] According to Starčević, the archetypal Roman was a proud peasant-soldier distinguished by the virtue of fidelity, while the Greek, on the other hand, was a decadent figure, inclined towards commerce, philosophising and debauchery.[13] Starčević nevertheless argued that the split between the churches was detrimental to Croatian unity, for there were Orthodox Croats as well as Catholic ones, and religion was not the main mark of Croat national authenticity, but rather, the Croatian people's marked state-building qualities.[14]

During the period of the 'migration of peoples' (*Völkerwanderung*), the Croats had, as a conquering people, succeeded in imposing their will and spirit upon all the inhabitants of the western Balkans.[15] Starčević argued that the ruling Nemanjić dynasty of the medieval Serbian kingdom had actually possessed the master Croatian 'spirit.'[16] Accordingly, the state-building Serbian nobility had formed part of the ruling Croatian nation. Starčević was able to buttress his argument on the antiquity of Croatian historic rights by citing, as a source, the tenth-century account later known as *De administrando imperio*, largely written by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and his officials. According to Constantine, the Croats fought and defeated the Avars for possession of Dalmatia and Pannonia in the seventh century AD.[17] The Emperor also

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[10] Ante Starčević, 'Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj.' In *Djela dra. Ante Starčevića*, Josip Bratulić ed. (Varaždin: Inačica, 1995), 156–159.

[11] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 342–343, 345, 347.

[12] Ibid., 340.

[13] Starčević, 'Pasmina Slavoserbska po Hervatskoj', 144–146.

[14] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 348.

[15] Ibid., 347–348.

[16] Ibid., 341.

[17] John V. A. Fine Jr., *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth Century to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 49–59.

wrote that the name 'Serb' was derived from the Latin *servus* because the Serbs were slaves of the Romans.[18] Starčević used this information to compare the Croats, who 'bravely fight against the terrible Avars' and have an organised state, with the Serbs, who 'beg Byzantium for a piece of land.'[19]

In response to Vuk Karadžić's expansionist linguistic nationalism, Starčević argued that the Croats and Bulgars were the only state-creating nations among the South Slavs, and he periodically claimed that all South Slavs (except Bulgars) were really Croats.[20] Starčević also argued at times that all Serbs were Orthodox Croats who had been Serbianised by Imperial Russia, which, beginning with Peter the Great's reign, had aimed to expand the influence of Orthodox Russia into the Balkans.[21] The position of Serbia itself in Starčević's ideology remains unclear. As Mario Spalatin notes, he does appear to have made a distinction between the Serbs of 'historic' Croatia (including Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Serbians of Serbia proper. Starčević thought that the latter should adopt a Croatian national consciousness, but did not believe that the Serbians should be forcibly Croatised. On the other hand, 'any inhabitant of historic Croatia, who did not wish to be identified as a Croatian, had to be either a foreigner or a traitor to his nation.'[22] In other words, the Serbians of Serbia had a choice, which the Croatian Serbs did not—and if the latter refused their membership of the Croatian nation, they were nothing more than *Slavoserbs*.

Blood and Race ('Breed')

Starčević viewed the unity of the Croatian nation resting on essentially spiritual rather than biological grounds.[23] He did not believe in the notion of racial purity. Starčević argued rightly that 'every nation was a mix of diverse nations, of diverse blood' and the Croat too undoubtedly had 'Roman, or Greek or some Barbarian blood.'[24] However, it is important to note that he also used racial arguments from time to time, and these ideas were to have a marked influence on later anti-Yugoslavist Croat racial

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[18] Ibid., 52.
[19] Mario S. Spalatin, 'The Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević, 1845–1871', *Journal of Croatian Studies* 16 (1975): 65.
[20] Gross, 'National-Integrational Ideologies', 18–19.
[21] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', 123.
[22] Ibid., 125.
[23] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 347–348.
[24] Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?', 39–40.

thought. For example, although Starčević argued that *Slavoserbs* ('slaves') could be found in all nations, he also periodically defined them in racial terms. When his closest political associate, Eugen Kvaternik (1825–1871), once asked him on the meaning of the term 'Slavoserb', Starčević explained that 'Slavoserb is the ethnic name of this race' and described it as 'a race of slaves, the most loathsome beasts.'[25] On the other hand, Starčević also felt that those of *Slavoserb* extraction—whom he referred to as being of 'impure blood'—could be assimilated into the Croatian nation through permanent settlement of the land (thereby acquiring property) and mixed marriages with 'true Croats.'[26] Starčević never defined what the characteristics of a 'true' Croat were, nor did he clarify the exact identity of the Serbs, while his concepts of 'impure blood' and 'breed' were also somewhat muddled. Kvaternik, for his part, was more exclusive: he argued that only those Croats related by blood to the five brothers and two sisters who had brought the Croats to their present day homeland in the seventh century AD, as recounted in Emperor Constantine's account, could be called true Croats.[27]

Although he argued that there were no longer any pure blooded Croats, Starčević nonetheless claimed that the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were the racially purest Croats. His positive attitude to the Muslims was shaped by his theory of historic state right. According to Starčević, Bosnia and Herzegovina had been part of the medieval Croatian kingdom, while the Bosnian Muslims (who had formed the upper class of Ottoman-ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina) were the descendants of the medieval Bosnian Croat nobility that had converted to Islam in order to preserve its titles and privileges.[28] To Starčević, this action on the part of the Bosnian nobility—sacrificing its faith in favour of its 'lordship'—proved just how strong the sense of noble honour was in this part of the Croatian nation.[29] This action further ensured that the Bosnian Muslims remained a closed upper caste, distinct from both ethnic Turks and non-Muslim Bosnian serfs, which meant the Muslims had retained 'the purest Croatian blood.'[30] For Starčević, the 'Mohammedans of Bosnia and Herzegovina have nothing [in common] with the Turkish Mohammedan

[25] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', 111.
[26] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 348.
[27] The five brothers were named Klukas, Muhlo, Lovelos, Kosentzis and Hrobatos, the two sisters, Tuga and Buga. See ibid., 268.
[28] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', 55.
[29] Gross, *Izvorno pravaštvo*, 308.
[30] Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?', 40.

breed; they are of Croatian breed, they are the oldest and purest nobility that Europe [possesses].'[31]

These were novel ideas in a country where the nobility prided itself on Croatia's historic role as *antemurale Christianitatis*, defending Central Europe from the Ottomans.[32] In contrast, Starčević admired the Ottoman Empire for what he saw as its greater religious tolerance and less stricter feudal system in comparison with Christian Europe.[33] Furthermore, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina had escaped the corrupting influences of 'decadent' Western civilisation, 'which obscures the mind, poisons the heart and kills our existence.' Starčević even went so far as to encourage his followers to read the Koran, 'so that they might be able to better understand their "brothers" in the Ottoman Empire.'[34] In fact, Starčević 'was one of the first Christian thinkers anywhere to express admiration for Islam.'[35]

Starčević's ideas on race ('breed') and the relations between 'master' and 'slave' nations had developed in an environment of growing national antagonisms, which characterised the inter-ethnic relations within the Habsburg Monarchy. All of these national conflicts (Croat-Serb, Hungarian-Romanian, German-Czech and so on) were centred around, to a large extent, the clash between the modern nationalisms of 'historic' and 'non-historic' nations. Usually, the disputes involved territory; a non-historic nation, such as the Serbs or 'Vlachs' of the Croatian Military Frontier, was found living on the land of a historic nation. Although his judgements of other cultures (especially the Serbian and German) were frequently ethnocentric,[36] it should also be noted that Starčević recognised Croatian culture was not some pure homogeneous entity even if it was distinct. As Banac argues, though Starčević 'identified nations with states and therefore denied the multinational character of his Great Croatia, he was nevertheless conscious of its composite nature. His Croats were a historical—indeed a moral—community, not a community of

[31] Cited in Ante Starčević, *Misli i pogledi: Pojedinac—Hrvatska—svijet*, Blaž Jurišić ed. (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1971), 90.

[32] Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', 55.

[33] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 364.

[34] Cited in Spalatin, 'Croatian Nationalism of Ante Starčević', 54–55.

[35] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 108.

[36] As an anti-Austrian Francophile Starčević considered the Germans a barbaric people who had become enlightened only by studying the classical languages and French. Starčević, 'Bi-li k Slavstvu ili ka Hrvatstvu?', 26.

blood.'[37] Starčević's adherence to civic nationalism can be clearly discerned in the choice of the baptised Jew Josip Frank (1844–1911) as his successor to lead the Croatian Party of Right. The son of German-speaking Jews from Hungary, Frank was born in the northeast Croatian-Slavonian town of Osijek and was baptised into the Roman Catholic faith in 1874.[38] His political enemies in Croatia, however, often used openly anti-Semitic arguments in their political campaigns against him.[39]

It would be misleading to accuse Starčević of having introduced the idea of race and/or ethnic exclusiveness to modern Croatian politics. Cathie Carmichael, for example, writes that 'within a state's right tradition, a civic Croatian nation state should have been able to embrace non-Croats within its borders. But a strong element within Croatian nationalism regarded individuals from other ethnic groups as essentially undesirable "aliens."'[40] The 'strong element' Carmichael has in mind is the Starčevićist type of Croat nationalism. Yet, in reality, it was the pan-Slavist and Yugoslavist Croat nationalists, not Starčević, who taught the Croats to think in essentially ethnolinguistic/racial terms. In this respect, the Croat Yugoslavists were only following the general ideological trend in mid-nineteenth century east-central Europe. As Duško Sekulić notes, 'the emergence of Croatian national identity where people defined themselves in primordial terms . . . was enmeshed with civic identity, with acquisition of political rights, with modernization of feudal society.'[41]

On the other hand, Starčević's recourse to racial ideas and language is significant to this discussion on the development of racial theory in late nineteenth-century Croatia. To be sure, Starčević's ideas on race remained confused and contradictory because they were in theoretical opposition to his idea of a civic Croatian nation state. The Croat modernist poet and writer Antun Gustav Matoš (1873–1914) was the first observer to notice this discrepancy between Starčević's political/civic nationalism on the one hand, and his ethnolinguistic/racial nationalism on the other. As Matoš pointed out, in some of his important works, Starčević seems, 'like Gobineau', to regard 'the racial, ethnic factor [to be] dominant in politics, branding the Serbs as a foreign element by their race and blood.' However,

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[37] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 106.

[38] Stjepan Matković, *Čista stranka prava* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001), 23.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Cathie Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2002), 55–58.

[41] Duško Sekulić, 'Civic and Ethnic Identity: The Case of Croatia', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27, No. 3 (2004): 464.

in his 'main, programmatic, foundational ideas' Starčević considers the 'state [civic], legal and historical idea as the national idea.'[42] Matoš also noted that Starčević's racial idea tended to include all South Slavs or Yugoslavs as Croats, but according to 'law and history', only those Croats and/or South Slavs who lived on the territory of Croat historic state right were 'nationally' Croatian.[43] Starčević was a sincere proponent of civic nationalism, but he could not avoid using the dominant racial terminology of the time:

> Nineteenth-century political language must be acknowledged as being infected by racial idioms. By mid-nineteenth century, the category of race ceased to be just an insignificant entry in the appendix of erudite naturalist encyclopaedias. It became . . . accepted as one of the distinctive tropes of intellectual discourse.[44]

Starčević's racial ideas marked an important shift in Croatian racial thought. Prior to Starčević, pan-Slavist Croat nationalists had used the science of comparative linguistics in order to prove racial kinship with other (South) Slavs. For the pan-Slavists/Yugoslavists, language was the key to discovering and/or defining the racial origins and identity of a people. During the course of the nineteenth century, however, it became increasingly clear that language was in fact a weak indicator of biological origins. For example, the initial idea of a shared Aryan/Indo-European linguistic origin favoured by the British colonial rulers of nineteenth-century India eventually gave way to a belief that Europeans could not possibly share a common racial origin with dark-skinned Hindus and Muslims.[45] Pan-Slavism suffered from the same intellectual inconsistencies as pan-Aryanism. By the second half of the nineteenth century, racial anthropologists, and philologists, were pointing out the fallacy of confounding language with 'racial' origin.

In contrast to the Croat Yugoslavists, who resorted to linguistics to prove the supposedly untainted Slavic racial origin of the Croats, Starčević used the discipline of history to show the opposite. Starčević used Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus' account to prove that the Croats had a distinct origin from other Slavs. The Emperor wrote of two separate migrations from the north to the Balkans in the late sixth and early seventh

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[42] Antun Gustav Matoš, *Feljtoni i eseji* (Zagreb: Naklada "Juga", 1917), 72.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Turda, '"The Magyars: A Ruling Race"', 8.
[45] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 84–86.

centuries AD: 1) the migration of Slavic tribes led by the Avars, the Turkic people that invaded and pillaged the Roman provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia; and 2) the somewhat later migration of the Croats, from the land of *White Croatia*, who defeated the Avars in battle and freed the Balkan Slavs from Avar bondage.[46] The Emperor's narrative had been accepted centuries ago by the *natio croatica* as a true account of its ethnic origins.[47] In contrast, Croat Yugoslavists, such as Strossmayer's closest political associate, the historian and priest Franjo Rački (1828–1894), and the philologist Vatroslav Jagić (1838–1923), rejected the testimony of the Byzantine Emperor because it implied that the Croats were somehow distinct from other Slavs; they argued instead that the Croats had not arrived in the Balkans separately, but had formed part of a mass Slav migration from the north.[48] For the pan-Slav Croat ideologists, as the philologist Radoslav Katičić remarks, 'it was necessary that the Croats be, by reason of their origins, an internal part of the amorphous Slav ethnicum.'[49]

Starčević also used historical documents and theories to highlight the non-Slav or Vlach origins of the (majority of) Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well to show the Croatian ethnic origins of the Bosnian Muslims. This was an important development in Croatian racial discourses because the question of the racial link between Serbs and Vlachs, and the theory of the Croat blood origins of the Muslims, became a significant part of Ustasha racial ideology. In 1918 Ivo Pilar acknowledged Starčević as having been the first figure to introduce the 'Vlach question or the question of the Balkan Romans' into the political arena. Pilar added that the Vlach question had not yet become the 'subject of scientific enquiry', so that during

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[46] There are actually two versions in the Emperor's account of how the Croats arrived in Roman Illyricum, where they defeated the Avars, from either, 1) 'north of the Hungarian lands' or 2) from the 'other side of Bavaria' (White Croatia); the first version claims that the Croats arrived in agreement with the Byzantine Emperor, while the second emphasises Croatian links to the Franks. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century Croat historiography 'was consistent in differentiating between the conquests and settlement of the Avars and Slavs, who destroyed the Roman order in Dalmatia . . . and the later settlement by the Croats who defeated the Avars . . .' See Radoslav Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats.' In Ivan Supičić ed. *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), 150–151, 156. For more on the question of cultural identity in early medieval Croatia see Danijel Dzino, *Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat: Identity Transformations in Post-Roman and Early Medieval Dalmatia* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[47] See Magaš, *Croatia Through History*, 52 and Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam*, 95.

[48] Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', 156–159.

[49] Ibid., 159. There were also Yugoslavist intellectuals, such as Natko Nodilo, who accepted the theory of two separate migrations of Slavs and Croats. See Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', 159.

Starčević's time this question was vilified as 'politically tendentious.'[50] Muddled and unclear as they were, Starčević's racial ideas nonetheless represent an important intellectual and ideological step in the transition from the language based pan-Slav/Yugoslav racial theory of the nineteenth century to the anti-Yugoslavist theory based on racial anthropology of the early twentieth century. The Illyrians and Yugoslavists had intellectually established an Aryan and Slavic racial and ethnolinguistic lineage for the Croats, marking the Croats off from their non-Aryan Hungarian neighbours to the north, and their non-Slavic Italian and Austrian-German neighbours in the west and north-west. What remained open and unclear was the question of the Croats' relationship to their South Slav linguistic 'brethren' to the south and east.

Conclusion

Starčević had not clarified the question of the specific ethnolinguistic or racial origins of the Croats, nor had he clarified the precise nature of the ethnolinguistic differences between Croats and Serbs. Starčević was, however, the first Croat national ideologist who started to disentangle the confusion surrounding the question of language and racial origins. Starčević also provided the Croats with defined spiritual characteristics of their own; in his writings, the Croats were not part of some 'amorphous Slav ethnicum,' but a master and conquering historic people characterised by their 'ruling spirit.' For Starčević, this spirit was inherited through the blood, and, in that sense, one can characterise such ideas as racial. As Katherine Verdery argues:

> . . . a racist ideology is one that classifies a person on the bases of what are socially presumed to be *unchangeable* characteristics . . . Although physical traits are in objective terms generally unchangeable and cultural ones are not, some systems of ethnic classification nonetheless proceed on the contrary assumption. For instance, many Hungarians . . . spoke of Romanians *as if they were incapable of civilization*—that is in racist terms but with culture as the relevant trait.[51]

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[50] L. von Südland (Ivo Pilar), *Južnoslavensko pitanje: Prikaz cjelokupnog pitanja*. Trans. Fedor Pucek (1943, reprint: Varaždin: Hrvatska demokratska stranka, 1990), 183.

[51] See Verdery's introduction in Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery eds. *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995), 9fn, xvii.

Starčević's ideas on 'blood' and 'breed' were not explicitly racist—he did not claim the Croats were racially (physically or psychologically) superior to other groups—but he did assert that the Croats were an exceptional and unique people possessing inalterable traits. Starčević had provided the spiritual characteristics of the Croatian 'breed', but not its physical or anthropological features. By the end of the nineteenth century it was clear that the idea of Croat authenticity required a scientific or anthropological basis in order to have intellectual credibility. As Christopher Hutton remarks, racial anthropology replaced the previous idea of *Volk* or

> . . . the biblical concept of a people defined as a descent group or lineage sharing a common language with two independent indices of affinity: the linguistic and the racial. The weight of scholarly or "scientific" opinion eventually accepted the distinction between racial and linguistic identity.[52]

[52] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 84–85.

CHAPTER THREE

RACE THEORY IN HABSBURG CROATIA, 1900–1918

Introduction

In the age of nationality, or national self-determination, in which every European nation was supposed to have its own independent state, anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals had to prove to the wider world that they were indeed a nation in every sense of the word, and in an age of science, they needed firm scientific arguments to convince doubters, including the proponents of Croat Yugoslavism. Accordingly, the question of racial anthropology began to increasingly interest the minds of anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals in Croatia, who looked to the prevailing ideas of racial anthropologists and theorists in Europe (particularly Austria and Germany) as a guide to studying race in the western Balkans.

Since the late nineteenth century racial theories had aided a large number of nationalist politicians and academics in the interpretation of national conflicts in central, eastern and southeastern Europe. As George Mosse noted, 'racism gave new dimensions to the idea of rootedness inherent in all of nationalism, while at the same time sharpening the differences between nations, providing clear and unambiguous distinctions between them.'[1] One of the most significant racial ideas that found widespread acceptance in both popular and intellectual circles in *fin-de-siècle* Austria-Hungary was the notion that the Slavs had historically been incapable of forming and/or maintaining states on their own. Therefore, all the Slavic states known to history were actually founded by Germanic or Turkic martial castes, which succeeded in establishing their rule over a mass of Slav subjects (this had occurred, for example, in the early history of the medieval kingdoms of Russia and Bulgaria).

[1] Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution*, 55.

Germanic Rulers, Slav Subjects and Asiatic Nomads

The idea of Slav inferiority in the area of state building had a long history. In St. Petersburg in 1749 the Russian imperial historian, Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783), argued that the medieval Kievan state (*Rus'*) was founded by Norsemen or Vikings.[2] Indeed, in the case of Russian history, 'in the West, and particularly in Germany, it was quite common formerly to distinguish between the *élites* or ruling class in Russia, thought to be of Aryan or Germanic origin, and the people who were of mixed or Mongol blood.'[3] In a chapter of the *Cambridge Medieval History* from 1911, the Czech historian Jan Peisker (1851–1933) wrote that 'all so-called Slav States of which we have sufficient information turn out to be either Germanic or Altaian foundations.'[4] The early medieval Slavs were considered natural slaves: 'The Slav was the most prized of human goods. With increased strength outside his marshy land of origin . . . industrious, content with little, good-humoured, and cheerful, he filled the slave markets of Europe, Asia, and Africa.'[5]

Slavic (particularly Russian) scholars had always felt uncomfortable with a passage from the medieval Russian 'Chronicle of Nestor', which seemed to strongly suggest Slavic inferiority and political dependence on the West. The particular passage recounted how Slavic tribes appealed to the Vikings by telling them that 'our land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come and rule over us.'[6] Slavophile thinkers of the nineteenth century had tried to turn the prevailing idea of the inherent Slavic incapability of higher organisation and state building on its head by arguing that the pacific and democratic nature of the Slavs was a sign of their greater humanity and ethical morality. The founder of the Slavophile movement in Russia, Aleksey Stepanovich Khomyakov (1804–1860), argued that Slavic acceptance of the Vikings (or Varangians) was actually 'proof of the basic pacifism of the Slavs and of their moral superiority.'[7]

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[2] Davies, *Europe*, 656.

[3] Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 116.

[4] [Jan] T. Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs.' In H. M. Gwatkin & J. P. Whitney eds. *The Cambridge Medieval History* (1911; reprint Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), Chapter XIV, Vol. II, 433.

[5] Ibid., 429.

[6] Cited in Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 106.

[7] Ibid., 125.

Peisker, for his part, argued that the Slavs had in fact formed a human barrier protecting Western civilisation from the onslaught of various hordes of Asiatic, Turkic or Altaian nomads: 'The misery of the Slavs was the salvation of the West. The energy of the Altaians was exhausted in Eastern Europe, and Germany and France behind the Slavic breakwater were able freely to develop their civilisation.'[8] Thus, the real threat to the West was not posed historically by the Slavs, but by the Turkic-Asiatic ('Altaian') nomads of central Asia, such as the Avars, Huns, Mongols and Turks. These nomadic horsemen, Peisker wrote, destroyed the Chinese led Orient, 'the cradle and chief nursery of civilisation' and subsequently had it 'delivered over to barbarism.' Asiatic nomadism also 'completely paralysed the greater part of Europe, and it transformed . . . the race, spirit, and character of countless millions . . . That which is called the inferiority of the East European is *its* work . . .'[9] The Slavs had thus been polluted, to a large degree, by the admixture of Altaian or Mongol blood. The 'primitive German', on the other hand, 'was as savage in war as the mounted [Altaian] nomad, but far superior in character and capacity for civilisation.'[10] The Slavs could only be led by others.

Peisker claimed that the contemporary Slavic peoples were 'therefore not original but a gradual crystallisation since the sixth century into linguistic units out of the peoples transplanted by the Avars.'[11] In line with this thesis, Peisker argued that the Croatian kingdom had been established by an Avar ruling elite.[12] In contrast, the Austrian sociologist Ludwig Gumplowicz (1838–1909) argued that the Germanic Goths had founded both the Croatian and Serbian medieval kingdoms. He had coined the term *Rassenkampf* ('racial war') to denote struggles between different peoples or races: states were formed when one racial group conquered another and established itself as the ruling class.[13] According to Gumplowicz, the migration of peoples (*Völkerwanderung*) that occurred after the fall of the Western Roman Empire did not involve the movement of entire peoples, but consisted of the migrations of 'warrior bands' (*Kriegerscharen*) in the

[8] Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs', 434.

[9] J. Peisker, 'The Asiatic Background.' In H. M. Gwatkin & J. P. Whitney (eds.) *The Cambridge Medieval History* (1911; reprint Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), Chapter XII, Vol. 1, 359.

[10] Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs', 433.

[11] Ibid., 437.

[12] Ibid., 439–440.

[13] For more on Gumplowicz and his influence on intellectual discourses in Austria-Hungary, see Turda, '"The Magyars: A Ruling Race"', 25–28.

pursuit of 'land and people.'[14] The Croats who arrived in Dalmatia from White Croatia to fight the Avars were in fact an Ostrogothic 'tribe of masters' (*Herrenstamm*).[15] This tribe of Goths was probably already Slavicised (in a linguistic sense) before its arrival in the Balkans, where the Goths/Croats replaced the Avars as the ruling class of the settled Slav population (Gumplowicz argued that the Serbian state had been established in a similar manner).[16]

Gumplowicz's historical arguments were based mainly on sociological theory, for the sociologist, unlike the historian, was aware of the fact that during the Middle Ages, 'only warrior bands' and not 'entire peoples' had 'migrated in the search of possession of land and people.'[17] According to Gumplowicz, nations were formed from an amalgam of the conquerors and conquered, and over time, these nations acquired the characteristics of a 'race', even if they were not races 'in an anthropological sense.'[18] The 'feeling of race' was characterised by 'social-psychic factors' such as a common language and religion. The nations of East-Central Europe were thus, anthropologically speaking, 'a mixture of heterogeneous ethnic elements', including 'Thracians, Illyrians, Scordisci, Slavs, Avars, Romans and Goths.'[19]

With regard to the origins of the Croats, Gumplowicz also based his argument, in part, on certain historical sources, which had closely linked the Croats and Goths. From the late fifth to the mid-sixth century, the Croat lands had been part of the Ostrogothic Kingdom, and two of the three oldest accounts of early Croatian history, the twelfth-century Chronicle of the Priest of Dioclea and the thirteenth-century *Historia Salonitana* by Thomas the Archdeacon of Split derived the origins of the Croatian state in Dalmatia from the previous Gothic rulers.[20] In the former Chronicle, the Goths, led by their King Totila, establish a Gothic-Slavic kingdom in Dalmatia, while in Thomas' account, Totila leads a Gothic army, together with several (Slav) clans from Poland, in the conquest of the land of *Curetia* ('Croatia') in the Dalmatian hinterland; in Thomas' history, the Croats are synonymous

[14] Ludwig Gumplowicz, 'Die politische Geschichte der Serben und Kroaten', *Politisch-Anthropologische Revue: Monatsschrift für das soziale und geistige Leben der Völker* (Eisenach und Leipzig: Thüringische Verlags-Anstalt, 1902/1903), 780.
[15] Ibid., 781–783.
[16] Ibid., 783–785.
[17] Ibid., 784.
[18] Ibid., 789.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Katičić, 'On the Origins of the Croats', 151–155.

with both the Slavs and Goths.[21] The Gothic tradition of Croat origins may well have originated as a myth of the ruling Croat Trpimirović dynasty sometime toward the end of the eleventh century.[22]

New discoveries in the fields of philology and archaeology allowed early twentieth century historians to present new theories on the obscure origins of the proto-Croats. In particular, the Iranian theory of Croat origins was to occupy an important place in discourses on ethnolinguistic/racial identity in Croatia. This theory can be traced to the eighteenth-century Croat historian Josip Mikoczy (1734–1800), who first presented his theory at the Royal Academy in Zagreb in 1797: 'the Croats, [who are] Slavs by their nationality, originated from the Sarmatians, the descendants of the Medes, and arrived in Dalmatia from Poland around the year 630.'[23] In 1853 the Russian archaeologist Pavel Mihajlovič Leontjev discovered two marble tablets with Greek inscriptions from the second and third centuries AD in the former Hellenic settlement of Tanais at the mouth of the Don River on the Sea of Azov. The tablets bore the inscriptions of several male names including *Horoúathos*, *Horoáthos* and *Horóathos*, 'which convincingly recall the Croatian national name [Hrvat].'[24] In 1901 the Russian historian Aleksandr Lvovič Pogodin identified these names (which are variations of the same personal name) as linguistically Iranian; the area around the Black Sea and the Caucasus region was home to numerous Iranian-speaking peoples such as the Scythians and Sarmatians.[25] In 1911 the Czech historian Konstantin Jireček (1854–1918) became the first scholar to conclude, upon the basis of the similarity between the Croatian ethnonym and the names from Tanais, that the name 'Croat' was of Iranian origin.[26]

In Croatia itself, the historian Luka Jelić suggested (in 1912) that pre-Romanic Old Croatian sacral architecture contained ancient Persian building and ornamental decorative elements. Jelić's hypothesis derived

[21] Ibid.

[22] Emil Heršak and Boris Nikšić, 'Hrvatska etnogeneza: Pregled komponentnih etapa i interpretacija (s naglaskom na euroazijske/nomadske sadržaje)', *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 23, No. 3 (2007): 261.

[23] Cited in Mato Marčinko, *Mučenička Hrvatska* (Zagreb: HKD Sv. Jeronima, 2008), 331, 343.

[24] Ante Škegro, 'Two Public Inscriptions from the Greek Colony of Tanais at the Mouth of the Don River on the Sea of Azov', *Review of Croatian History*, 1, No. 1 (2005): 9.

[25] Francis Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (London: The Polish Research Centre Ltd., 1949), 274.

[26] Vladimir Košćak, 'Iranska teorija o podrijetlu Hrvata.' In Neven Budak ed. *Etnogeneza Hrvata* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1995), 110.

the Persian influences on Croatian art from the Iranian Alans who had arrived with the Goths in Dalmatia in the sixth century AD; after the fall of the Ostrogothic Kingdom the Alans remained in Dalmatia and transmitted their artistic concepts and tendencies to the Croats.[27] Jelić did not claim the Croats were themselves of Iranian origin. It was not until the interwar period that individual Croat intellectuals and academics began to expound the theory that the proto-Croats had been a Slavicised Iranian, or perhaps Iranian-Gothic, people.

Although the general academic Western view of the old Slavs held that they were inferior to the Germanic peoples in organisational and martial skills, historians, anthropologists and racial theorists still tended to define the medieval Slavs as being of more or less pure Indo-European/Aryan racial type. Peisker, for example, argued that the neighbours of the Slavs, the Magyars, were of Turkish and partially Ugrian origin, 'but they must also once have dominated Indo-European peoples and mixed themselves very strongly with them.'[28] In their former nomadic domains in the Pontic Steppe, the Magyars 'engaged in terrible slave-hunting among the neighbouring Slavs', and as 'notorious women-hunters, they must have assimilated much Slav, Alan, and Circassian blood, and thus became [according to a ninth-century source] "handsome, stately men."'[29] Peisker had classified the Indo-European or Aryan type as dolichocephalic (long-headed) in skull shape, which was specifically characteristic of the fair and blue-eyed Nordic race (*Homo Europaeus*).[30] In 1912 the Austrian anatomist Carl Toldt (1840–1920) measured 118 skulls found in old Slavic graves in Austria-Hungary and discovered that 39% were dolichocephalic in shape, 52.5% were mesocephalic (medium-headed), while only 8.5% were brachycephalic (broad-headed).[31] Toldt found a similar ratio among the old Slavic graves he studied in central and northern Germany. He argued that the South Slavic area had undergone an extensive racial transformation within the period of a thousand years, since 'the old long-headed Slavic race . . . has been fully replaced by the brachycephalic type from among the old local population, or newcomers in this area.'[32] The brachycephalic type Toldt referred to was the Dinaric race.

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[27] Ibid., 111.
[28] Peisker, 'The Asiatic Background', 355.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 329–330, 353–356.
[31] Toldt cited in Francis R. Preveden, *A History of the Croatian People* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), Vol. I, 39.
[32] Ibid., 40.

Racial Anthropology: The Dinaric Race

By the beginning of the twentieth century, racial anthropology had emerged as a separate scientific discipline. Racial anthropologists classified the various human types or races upon the basis of external physical features, notably the shape and size of the head. The basic measurement employed in determining race was the 'cephalic index' (the percentage of breadth to length in any skull), first employed by the Swedish scientist Anders Retzius (1796–1860) in 1842.[33] The cephalic index was used to distinguish between dolichocephalic and brachycephalic skulls. Other physical features such as the nose, hair and eye colour, body shape and height were also scrutinised and studied.[34] The naturalistic classification of humankind into separate races implied that human beings were also subject to nature's laws.[35] Yet racial anthropologists were also influenced by aesthetic preferences and stereotypical generalisations.[36] Furthermore, alongside the science of race, there still existed the 'mystery of race' (i.e. spiritual racism), which was more concerned with the spiritual and mental characteristics of a race and less with physical ones.[37]

The detailed examination of the skull, face and body led racial anthropologists to classify several racial types within Europe. According to the French race theorist and anthropologist Georges Vacher de Lapouge (1854–1936) in 1899, three 'racial species' existed in Europe: *Homo Europaeus* (or Aryan race), a tall, blond, blue-eyed and dolichocephalic type; *Homo Alpinus* (Alpine race), a short, stocky, dark and brachycephalic type; and *Homo Mediterraneus* (Mediterranean race), a short, slim, dark and dolichocephalic race.[38] According to Lapouge, the Aryan race was superior to the Alpine and Mediterranean races.[39] Racial anthropologists were as interested in the question of racial differences among Europeans as they were in the more obvious physical differences between the main races of white (European), yellow (Asian) and black (African).[40] The French anthropologist Joseph Deniker (1852–1918) argued there were six main or 'primary' European races: the Northern (fair hair, dolichocephalic,

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[33] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 27–28.
[34] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 21–23.
[35] Ibid., 22.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 94.
[38] Turda, '"The Magyars: A Ruling Race"', 30.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 24.

tall); Eastern (fair hair, sub-brachycephalic, short); Ibero-insular (dark, dolichocephalic, short); Cevenole or Western (dark, brachycephalic, short); Littoral (dark, sub-dolichocephalic, tall); and Adriatic or Dinaric (dark, brachycephalic, tall).[41] Deniker identified Lapouge's *Homo Europaeus* with the Northern race (hence to be known as the Nordic), but rejected the notion of an 'Aryan race.' As Deniker pointed out, 'modern philologists . . . show that we can no longer speak to-day of an "Aryan race", but solely of a *family of Aryan languages*, and perhaps of a primitive *Aryan civilisation* which had preceded the separation of the different Aryan dialects from their common stock.'[42]

Deniker applied the same conclusion to the classification of the main ethnolinguistic families of Europe. The Aryan ethnic groups thus consisted of 'the three great linguistic families' of the Latin, Teutonic and Slav, as well as the three smaller ones of Celtic, Helleno-Illyrian and Letto-Lithuanian.[43] The 'non-Aryan group' in Europe consisted of the Basques, Finno-Ugrians, Turks, Mongols, Semites and Caucasian peoples.[44] These ethnic families were based on 'difference of language' and were 'heterogeneous enough in physical type and civilisation.'[45] In relation to the development of race theory in Croatia (and the Balkans), it is pertinent that Deniker's racial classification 'would be decisive for the discourse of "racial science" in the following decades in Central and eastern Central Europe.'[46]

Deniker's classification of the Adriatic or Dinaric race was based mainly on the population of present day Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina: this 'dark, brachycephalic, tall race' was named the Adriatic or Dinaric race 'because its purest representatives are met with along the coast of the Northern Adriatic and especially in Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Croatia' (hence the name being derived from the Dinaric Alps on the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina).[47] The Dinaric race could also be found in northeast Italy, Romania, Slovenia, the Tyrol, Switzerland and parts of France. The Adriatic/Dinaric race was characterised by a 'lofty stature, extreme brachycephaly, brown or black wavy hair, dark eyes, straight

[41] Joseph Deniker, *The Races of Man: An Outline of Anthropology and Ethnography,* Havelock Ellis ed. (London: Walter Scott, Limited, 1900), 325–326.
[42] Ibid., 318–319, 329.
[43] Ibid., 334.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., 334–335.
[46] Promitzer, 'The Body of the Other: "Racial Science" and Ethnic Minorities in the Balkans', 27.
[47] Deniker, *The Races of Man*, 333.

eyebrows, elongated face, delicate straight or aquiline nose' and 'slighty tawny skin.'[48] This Adriatic/Dinaric 'primary race' was probably closely linked to a 'secondary race' with similar features. Deniker suggested the name of 'Sub-Adriatic' for this secondary race, which was 'not quite so tall and less brachycephalic, but having lighter hair and eyes.'[49] Deniker hypothesised that the Sub-Adriatic type probably emerged from a mixture of the Adriatic/Dinaric race with the 'secondary Sub-northern race', a tall, fair mesocephalic type. The Sub-Adriatic race was located mainly in Bavaria, Austria, south-east Bohemia and parts of northern Italy.[50] German racial anthropologists would later tend to define the Sub-Adriatic race as a 'Nordic-Dinaric' racially mixed type.

Balkan Anthropology and Ćiro Truhelka: Fair-Haired Slavs and Dark-Skinned Vlachs

The first Croatian intellectual to devote a detailed study to the question of race (racial anthropology) in the western Balkans was the noted archaeologist and historian Ćiro Truhelka. He would locate the 'Nordic-Dinaric' type in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Truhelka specialised in Bosnian/Ottoman history and made many significant contributions to research in the area of medieval Bosnian and Ottoman history in the Balkans and was among the curators of Sarajevo's first state museum, founded in 1885.[51] Truhelka introduced his race theory in a booklet (which he wrote anonymously) from 1907 entitled *Hrvatska Bosna (Mi i "oni tamo")* ('Croatian Bosnia: We and "They over There"').[52] In this text Truhelka argued that Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged to Croatia on racial, historical and geographical grounds.

Truhelka's political argument in this booklet was typically Starčevićist, in other words, Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged to the Kingdom of Croatia by historic state right.[53] Truhelka also appropriated the Bosnian Muslims as ethnic Croats in Starčevićist fashion: though subject to the Ottomans in a religious and political sense, it was clear that there was

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 334.
[50] Ibid.
[51] See Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam,* 300–301.
[52] [Ćiro Truhelka], *Hrvatska Bosna: Mi i "oni tamo"* (Sarajevo: Tiskara Vogler i drugovi, 1907).
[53] Ibid., 37–46.

'no kinship in an ethnic or cultural sense' between the Bosnians and Ottoman Turks.[54] Geographically speaking, Bosnia and Herzegovina formed an integral part of the unique and separate region that stretched from Istria and the Slovenian Alps all the way along the Dinaric Alps to Montenegro and to the Drina River.[55] This area, with its characteristic karst landscape, was the exclusive homeland of the Croats, including the Catholics and Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Truhelka paid a great deal of attention to racial anthropology in his text, namely, the apparent physical differences between the Bosnian Catholics and Muslims on the one hand, and the Orthodox Bosnians on the other. The discipline of anthropology was able 'to confirm through an inductive manner the whole complex of physical and psychic phenomena as [they are] manifested in the mass of a people', and that 'complex in its entirety represents the characteristics of a race [*pasmina*]'.[56] Truhelka noted that 'laymen' often dismissed the findings of anthropology because it was clear that the contemporary European peoples were the product of a mixture of various ethnic elements, so that it was not possible, they argued, to anthropologically distinguish between those components. Truhelka, however, held that anthropology was actually able 'to establish a drop of ethnic blood [found] in an intricate mixture with other elements.'[57]

In any case, as Truhelka argued, all humans had some sort of inherited 'anthropological instinct', so that any lay person would, for example, be able to distinguish a Jew—whether 'Russian or Pole, German or French, English or Spanish by birth'—in 'a crowd of one hundred people.' So too would it be possible to recognise a Vlach, regardless of whether he was from Romania, Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina, or 'dressed in the clothes of a Persian shah.'[58] Truhelka's observation that the ability to recognise anthropological differences did not always need firm scientific evidence was commonplace among racial anthropologists: '. . . racial anthropology was continually reinforced by the common-sense perception that human racial diversity was an observable fact.'[59] At the same time, Truhelka claimed that an anthropological study of Bosnia and Herzegovina could not only be based on instinct, but also on 'the exact research of the physical

[54] Ibid., 5.
[55] Ibid., 7.
[56] Ibid., 11–12.
[57] Ibid., 12.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 23.

characteristics' of the Croats, who were native to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Orthodox population or 'so-called Serbs.'[60]

According to Truhelka, the pure Slavic race (*Slovjenska pasmina*), was distinguished by the traits of fair hair and blue eyes. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Catholics and Muslims belonged predominantly to the same fair Slavic-Croatian 'ethnic element in an anthropological sense', while the Orthodox Serbs were largely the dark-skinned descendants of the Balkan Romanic Vlachs.[61] Using previous anthropological data (based on the measurements of Austro-Hungarian soldiers from Bosnia and Herzegovina), Truhelka argued that there were more than twice the number of fair-haired Bosnian Catholics and Muslims (25,7% and 22,8% respectively) than fair-haired Orthodox Bosnians (10,4%); the number of blue-eyed Catholics and Muslims (25,7% and 17,5%) in comparison to blue-eyed Orthodox (6,3%) was even higher.[62] Furthermore, the Catholics and Muslims had a higher proportion of brachycephalic skulls, while the Orthodox population included a greater percentage of dolichocephalic heads.[63] This difference in skull shape indicated the cultural backwardness of the Bosnian Serbs, for dolichocephaly (according to the Swedish physician Anton Nyström) was a 'characteristic of old, culturally lower, races', while brachycephaly was evidence of a people's cultural progression.[64] The Catholics and Muslims also tended to have broader chests in comparison to the Orthodox.[65]

The Orthodox population thus 'represents a swarthy . . . physically weaker developed type.'[66] Although Truhelka did not specifically name the racial type of the Catholics and Muslims, it is clear that he was speaking of a 'Nordic-Dinaric' racial mixture, because he identified a type characterised by a broad head, broad chest and light pigmentation (though surprisingly he did not mention height). Truhelka asked those readers who might 'suspect the accuracy of our figures' to consult the works of doctors (even those of Orthodox faith) and French, Hungarian, Russian, Czech and other anthropologists.[67] The Croat archaeologist also asked his readers to 'carefully examine' the skin complexion of any dark-skinned

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60 [Truhelka], *Hrvatska Bosna*, 13.
61 Ibid., 14–15.
62 Ibid., 13–14.
63 Ibid., 15.
64 Ibid., 14.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., 15.
67 Ibid., 16.

Serb-Vlach acquaintances, because they would notice how their dark skin was sporadically marked by 'lighter spots': these were the signs of 'depigmentation, which is only observed among individuals who are the descendants of an older, darker race and a younger, fairer one that interbred with it.'[68]

Truhelka defined the Vlachs as the descendants of the Romanised Dacians from the north-east Balkans. According to modern anthropology, he wrote, the Dacians were 'a mixture of the primeval aborigines and Cymric-Celtic settlers', and were physically 'dark-skinned, with dark hair and black eyes.'[69] After Emperor Trajan conquered Dacia, the native tribes adopted the Latin language and Roman culture but they did not 'change their complexion, hair and eyes.' In any case, during that period, 'the majority of prehistoric peoples of antiquity were dark-skinned.'[70] The ancestors of the Vlachs had started to migrate *en masse* from their Daco-Romanian homeland to South Slav, and other Balkan, lands during the migration of peoples, adopting Slavic tongues and the Orthodox faith from Byzantium in the process.[71] Vlach settlements were mostly concentrated in Serbia and elsewhere where there existed Serbian Orthodox minorities; this led to extensive mixing between the nomadic Vlachs and Serbs. Through such an admixture the Vlachs had in fact driven 'a wedge into our body, which split the brothers of the one Slavic blood—the Croats and Serbs!'[72]

Truhelka was cautious to distinguish between the dark-skinned Serbs of Vlach descent and the fair-haired Serbs who, according to him, were pure Slavs. As gifted merchants and speculators, the Vlachs had in fact managed to secure economic and political power over the pure Slavic peasant Serbs in both Serbia and Bosnia.[73] Therefore, all the worse traits of the modern Serbs (i.e. their 'Byzantine' immorality and corruption, expansionist nationalism and megalomania) were actually not the product 'of the soul of the Slavic Serbs', but 'the consequence of the Byzantinism infiltrated among the Serbs by the Vlachs'.[74] The Serbian people had, unfortunately, been so polluted by Vlach blood that the contemporary

[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 18.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 18–20.
[72] Ibid., 20.
[73] Ibid., 20–22.
[74] Ibid., 25.

idea that Croats and Serbs were racial 'brothers' was the 'fantastic fiction of blind "Slavoserbs." '[75]

To be precise, Truhelka had actually sought to outline the racial differences between Croats and Vlachs, not Croats and Serbs, and the people 'over there' in the title of his work referred to the Vlachs. The racial differences between Croats and Vlachs were also reflected in their 'spiritual characteristics'; this spiritual contrast was in fact greater than that which existed between the Germanic and Romanic peoples, and this was due to the 'particular characteristics of the Vlach race.'[76] Truhelka defined the Vlachs as a *Dauerrasse*, or 'permanent race', similar to the Jews and Armenians: such a race was formed through an evolutionary process that had led to stagnation and the acquirement of permanent features.[77] A *Dauerrasse* was thus 'sterile, stereotypical, persistent, anthropologically rigid', in short, a race which 'no longer changes its external physical characteristics.' The Vlachs, Jews and Armenians represented 'old races' that always remain the same and anthropologically distinct from the peoples amongst whom they settle; these old races have a tendency toward 'tuberculosis and sterility, and then feebleness of the physical and psychic constitution', as well as having a tendency toward a nomadic way of life. Truhelka argued that the 'descendants of these type of once cultured races become cultural parasites.'[78] He concluded, accordingly, that the 'Vlacho-Serbs' of Bosnia and Herzegovina did not represent a political, but on the contrary, a 'social problem.'[79]

Truhelka's work had provided anti-Yugoslavist Croatian nationalism with a starting point for the elaboration of an anthropological theory on the wider question of the racial identity and origins of the Croats and other South Slavs. Truhelka would return to the subject of anthropology in the western Balkans during the interwar period. Before the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, however, another Croat intellectual, Ivo Pilar, wrote a much more detailed study of the 'South Slav Question', which was able to synthesise anthropological, cultural, historical, social and political arguments into an overarching idea of Croat racial uniqueness and distinction vis-à-vis the Serbs. Pilar acknowledged Truhelka's

[75] Ibid., 30.
[76] Ibid., 27.
[77] Ibid., 27–28.
[78] Ibid., 28.
[79] Ibid., 50.

'Croatian Bosnia' as the first work to deal with the Vlach question on a scientific basis.[80]

The Socio-Historical Theory of Ivo Pilar: Race and Religion

A lawyer by profession, Ivo Pilar completed his magnum opus, *Die südslawische Frage* ('The South Slav Question') under the German pseudonym of Ludwig von Südland in 1917/18, just before the collapse of the Monarchy. As a supporter of the so-called trialist solution to the Habsburg Empire's nationality problems (whereby Croatia would become the third state component alongside Austria and Hungary), Pilar wrote his book partly in order to promote support for the anti-Yugoslavist Croatian national cause in Vienna. He was also deeply interested in sociology, anthropology and history, and how those disciplines might unravel the questions of South Slav history. Pilar's *Südslawische Frage* would have a marked influence on young Croatian nationalists at the University of Zagreb, amongst whom copies of Pilar's work were distributed in the interwar period.[81] Pilar's 'South Slav Question' stressed the significance of racial differences in shaping the distinct cultural, religious and political traditions of Croats and Serbs.

Similarly to Truhelka, Pilar argued that the Croats had preserved the Nordic-Aryan racial and cultural heritage of their Slavic ancestors far more than the Serbs, who had interbred, to a large degree, with the Balkan-Romanic Vlachs. According to Pilar, the medieval 'old Croats' had been a 'Slavic-Aryan people of pure Aryan type: fair-haired, blue-eyed, tall height and [with] dolichocephalic heads.'[82] To substantiate the theory that the ancient Slavs were of Nordic-Aryan type, Pilar cited the Germanophile English racial philosopher, Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927), as a source. In his famous work, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* ('Foundations of the Nineteenth Century', 1899), Chamberlain argued that

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[80] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 183.

[81] Pilar's book was first published in German as L. von Südland, *Die südslawische Frage und der Weltkrieg. Übersichtliche Darstellung des Gesamt-Problems*, Manz Verlag, Wien, 1918. A Croatian translation, completed by Fedor Pucek, did not appear until 1943. A reprint of the 1943 Croatian edition was published in 1990 and I have relied on this translation. For more information on Pilar's book and the questions surrounding its genesis, see Srećko Lipovčan, 'Pilar's Work *The South Slav Question*: On the Origin of the Manuscript and the Fate of the first (Viennese) Edition, *Pilar—Croatian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1, No. 2 (2006): 43–56.

[82] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 19–20.

the old Slavs were, alongside the Germanic and Celtic peoples, part of the 'Germanic race.' He preferred the term 'Germanic' rather than 'Indo-European', which was 'a mere theoretical and hypothetical term.'[83] As Chamberlain remarked in regard to the Slavs:

> . . . the thick-set body, round head, high cheek-bones, dark hair, which we to-day consider to be typically Slavonic, were certainly not characteristics of the Slav at the time when he entered European history . . . In Bosnia one is struck with the tallness of the men and the prevalence of fair hair.[84]

Chamberlain cited the work of the Austrian anthropologist Augustin Weisbach (1837–1914), who argued that there had been some transformation of the skull shape among the Bosnians, for the present day population was predominantly round (broad) headed in contrast to the greater number of long-headed skulls (of the pure Nordic type) found in ancient and medieval graves. Nevertheless, the shape of the typical Bosnian face remained long (which was characteristic of Nordics).[85] Pilar explained in a footnote in his book that 'in Chamberlain's sense, I understand Germanics to include all Aryans, Teutons, the old Slavs and Celts.'[86]

Pilar admitted that the Croats had also assimilated some Vlachs, but much less so than the Serbs. The typical Serb had thus inherited his predominant physical features of black hair, dark eyes and dark skin from the Vlachs, and Pilar argued that these traits were, in turn, probably the result of Vlach admixture with Gypsies: he estimated that approximately 64% of Serbs consisted of 'dark types.'[87] Anthropological studies had further confirmed that in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 'there are more than two times [the number] of fair, Nordic types among the Catholics and Muslims than among the Orthodox', the latter belonging predominantly to 'some other dark, pre-Aryan type.'[88] Extreme dolichocephaly, coupled with dark skin, was also much more strongly represented among the Orthodox Bosnian Serbs. On the other hand the small number of 'moderately' dolichocephalic Catholics and Muslims were predominantly fair-haired and blue-eyed, and this was evidence that 'dolichocephalic types among the Serbs are of

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[83] Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Trans. John Lees (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1913), Vol. I, 498–499.
[84] Ibid., 505.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 18n (part V.), 419.
[87] Ibid., 108, 121–122, 170, 316.
[88] Ibid., 122.

Mediterranean [origin], while among the Catholics and Muslims, [long-headed types] are of Nordic origin.'[89]

The Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were specifically the descendants of a mixture of immigrant 'Bulgars, Orthodox Albanians, Greeks, Gypsies, and particularly very many Vlachs, pastoral Aromanians, and a certain percentage of [Slavic] Serbs.'[90] In addition, large numbers of Catholic Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina had converted to Serbian Orthodoxy during the Ottoman period, due to the lack of Catholic priests and the favouritism shown toward the Orthodox Church by the Ottoman authorities.[91] The only thing that held these disparate peoples together was their adherence to the Serbian Orthodox Church, which eventually led to their cultural assimilation as Serbs.[92] Pilar considered the Vlachs, who formed the core of the contemporary Serbs, to be a detriment to the social harmony and progress of states in which they lived. They were a race of destructive pastoral nomads and bandits; the Vlachs had, for example, made up the largest part of the brutal irregular forces of the Ottoman armies that had invaded Croatia.[93] Pilar also noted that the modern Serbs were accomplished traders and argued that this talent was closely connected to their Vlach nomadic heritage.[94]

In contrast to the Serbs, who had been exposed to the corrupt Vlach blood, the Croats of Pilar's day were still largely characterised by the values and virtues of their nobility, which was the only hereditary aristocracy in the Balkans: 'Croatian fidelity, Croatian hospitality, highly advanced sense for aesthetics and love for art and theatre, and on the other hand a weak sense for the realistic side of life.'[95] Croatia's medieval nobles, who were of 'pure Aryan race and fair complexion',[96] had impressed their indelible stamp on the Croatian national soul throughout the centuries. Although

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[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid., 27. *Aromuni* (Aromanians) is the name the Vlachs used for themselves. See Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 42.

[91] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 116–117. The Ottoman state had indeed shown favour toward the Orthodox Church, largely because the religious head of Orthodoxy resided in the Ottoman imperial capital, while the head of Catholicism was seated in Rome, and the two greatest enemies of the Ottomans were Catholic states—the Habsburg Empire and the Venetian Republic. As far as conversions to Orthodoxy are concerned, many Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina converted to Serbian Orthodoxy during the seventeenth century. See Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 70–71.

[92] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 27.

[93] Ibid., 112, 187.

[94] Ibid., 188.

[95] Ibid., 317.

[96] Ibid., 6fn, (part VI.) 419.

Pilar recognised the role non-Slavic groups had played in Croatian history, he also distinguished between the ruling elite that established the Croatian state and the subject population over which that elite ruled. Pilar thus claimed that the 'Croatian state was a product of the blending of the ruling Slavic layer with the remnants of the pre-Croatian subjugated Slavic, Avar, Roman and Illyrian population.'[97] The Croatian nobility emerged as the Ottoman Empire's strongest adversary in its westward push for expansion.[98] Among the South Slavs, only the Croats could be described as an 'unbreakable race, which even in the moment of death prides itself on its privileges, on its noble land and on its chivalry.'[99] For Pilar, noble chivalry was common to all Croats, regardless of their religion, Catholic or Islamic.

Pilar was interested in the question of the mysterious Bogomil religious sect from medieval Bosnia and other parts of the Balkans. The generally accepted theory at the time was that the Bosnian Bogomils had converted to Islam *en masse* after the fall of the medieval Bosnian kingdom.[100] The Bogomils seemed to have adhered to some form of Manichaean dualism, and were possibly influenced by the teachings of the Persian religious prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra). Pilar argued that, because of its 'Persian-Aryan and Old Slavic elements', the Bogomil Church was able to appeal to the spirit of the 'state-building Aryan-Slavic Croats.'[101] The Bogomils rejected the Old Testament (apart from the Book of Psalms), something one 'should understand as a reaction to the Semitic elements in Christianity.'[102] The Bogomils considered both the Catholics and Orthodox 'impure', while, in Bosnia itself, anti-Catholic sentiment was strengthened due to the crusading efforts of the Hungarian kings and Papacy aimed at reconverting the Bosnians to Catholicism.[103]

According to Pilar, the Bogomil Croatian nobility of Bosnia and Herzegovina converted to Islam out of spite toward the Hungarian King and Pope. This conversion ensured the continued dominant position of the Bosnian feudal lords, who retained their privileges and status in the Ottoman Empire.[104] Bogomilism had actually weakened the medieval

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97 Ibid., 26.
98 Ibid., 26, 114.
99 Ibid., 95.
100 Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 27–29.
101 Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 88.
102 Ibid., 89.
103 Ibid., 89–94.
104 Ibid., 100–102.

Bosnian state, for the Bogomils preached an ascetic way of life dedicated to sexual abstinence, vegetarianism and the condemnation of the life of the warrior.[105] Pilar concluded that, no matter how attractive Bogomilism may have appeared to the Bosnians, due to its opposition to Catholicism and Orthodoxy and its mysticism, such a religious sect, committed as it was to pacifism, was also very foreign to a 'warrior people' such as the Croats.[106] The embrace of Islam, on the other hand, actually liberated the Bosnian Croats, since it allowed a 'strong race' to give vent to its warrior virtues and political talents.[107] The Islamicised Bosnian Croat nobility would thus provide the bulk of the janissaries and advisors of the Sultan. Indeed, their influence was so great that the Croatian language became the second official language of the Ottoman court.[108] In Bosnia itself, the conversion of the Bogomils to Islam ensured that Bosnia and Herzegovina acquired a special status in the Ottoman Empire; although they assimilated the religion and culture of their Ottoman rulers, the Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina preserved their 'autochthonous race.'[109]

Turning to Serbian religious traditions, Pilar argued that the negative characteristics of the Serb-Vlachs were further exacerbated by Byzantine influence. Pilar devoted a large part of his book to exploring the differences between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, which he considered to lie mainly in the difference between the Roman-Germanic culture of Western Europe and the Greek-Slavic heritage of Byzantium. Pilar relied heavily on the work of the German scholar Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790–1861), a strong critic of nineteenth-century West European Philhellenism. Fallmerayer had argued that the Greeks of his day were primarily the descendants of 'Scythian Slavs' and 'Illyrian Albanians,' since 'not a single drop of real pure Hellenic blood flows in the veins of the Christian population of modern Greece.'[110] Similarly to Fallmerayer, Pilar took a disparaging view of the Greeks and Byzantine culture. The Greeks were a 'worthless people of mixed bloods', a mix of 'pre-Balkan, Slavic, Germanic and especially Near Eastern (Syrian-Semitic) peoples'; as a result, Byzantium did not possess the 'material and moral strength' to inherit the mantle of successor to the Roman Empire.[111] The Eastern Church was morally corrupt due to the

[105] Ibid., 89–90.
[106] Ibid., 96, 103.
[107] Ibid., 103.
[108] Ibid., 104.
[109] Ibid., 101.
[110] Cited in Fine, *Early Medieval Balkans*, 59.
[111] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 129.

Church's subjection to the Emperor, which meant that it was subject to the higher, and often amoral or immoral, aims of the state and politics.[112]

In contrast, the conflict between the Western Church and Holy Roman Empire had led to the separation of church and state, and coupled with 'Germanic individualism', had ensured the development of freedom in the West.[113] The 'militarily strong, politically active, state-building' Germanic peoples that settled in medieval Italy had restored the glory of the Western Roman Empire.[114] The Germanic nations had disputed the Byzantine claim to the inheritance of the 'Roman imperial crown', so that the Byzantine Emperor Justinian made it his life's aim 'to destroy the Germanic peoples and states.' Only through the 'extermination of all the Germanic elements in the state' could the conditions for Byzantium's survival be secured, and this was finally achieved after the defeat and extermination of the Goths and other Germanic remnants in the Eastern Roman Empire at the end of the fourth century AD.[115]

The Serbs, like the majority of Slav peoples, had converted to Orthodoxy because of the inherent Slavic inability to form an organised state.[116] By converting to Eastern Christianity the Slavs were able to claim part of the grandeur of the East Roman Empire. The Orthodox Slavs had, Pilar wrote, 'exchanged their Aryan-Slavic soul for political power.'[117] Two Slavic peoples, however, had not succumbed to the lure of the Byzantine imperial myth: these were the 'most pronounced Slavic, aristocratic states', Poland and Croatia.[118] The Poles and Croats had remained commited to Catholicism only because of their opposition to the Orthodox faith. This opposition was due to the 'innate aristocratic instincts of their proportionally purer race', which had given the Croats and Poles 'enough strength to raise themselves from peasants and create their own ruling aristocratic stratum.' Furthermore, their 'Slavic-Aryan blood felt a deep loathing for Orthodoxy, exactly as the Goths had once felt.'[119] The Serbs, on the other hand, were left with hatred for the Latin-Germanic West and the Catholic Church, which they had inherited from their one-time

[112] Ibid., 142.
[113] Ibid., 133–135.
[114] Ibid., 129–130.
[115] Ibid., 136.
[116] Ibid., 148–150.
[117] Ibid., 149.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 149–150.

Byzantine masters.[120] This animosity continued to permeate the Serbian spirit and culture throughout the ages, so that even Serbian hatred for Austria and Germany during the First World War could only be described as 'that real Byzantine hatred for people of other faiths, reinforced by the primeval anti-Germanic (anti-Aryan) spirit of Byzantium, which seeks to destroy the Aryan being.'[121]

For Pilar, the core of the 'South Slav Question' rested on the theory that there existed a dangerous racial-religious-political symbiosis consisting of the Vlach race, Serbian Orthodoxy, Byzantine imperial mysticism and Greater Serbian nationalism. One of Pilar's main sociological and historical conclusions was as follows:

> In the Serbian people, the dangerous traits of the traditions and aspirations of the Serbo-Byzantine Church had stumbled upon an unusually efficacious supplement for the penetration of the Balkan-Romanic nomad blood, which, due to its innate racial appetite for usurpation, its anti-social tendencies, its mania for destruction . . . has made the Serbs a first class danger for neighbouring peoples and states.[122]

Serbian-Yugoslavist Racial Ideas

Ivo Pilar wrote 'The South Slav Question' at a time when the 'Roman-Germanic' Habsburg Monarchy was approaching its historical end and the victory of the 'Serbo-Byzantine' Greater Serbian (and/or Yugoslav idea) seemed imminent. Pilar was well aware that his voice was a 'cry in the wilderness.'[123] Prior to the First World War, most Croatian political groups adhered in one way or another to the unitarist Yugoslavist ideology of *narodno jedinstvo* ('national oneness') between Croats and Serbs.[124] By 1918, the 'Croat political elite, middle classes, and most intellectuals were . . . committed to Yugoslavist unitarism.'[125] All the various strands of Yugoslavism (federalist, unitarist and so on) held firmly to the idea that there existed 'a particular reciprocity, a relationship of a special type between the South Slavic, or rather Yugoslav nations, according to which

120 Ibid., 150–156.
121 Ibid., 309.
122 Ibid., 189.
123 Ibid., 2.
124 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 98.
125 Ibid., 128.

these nations altogether represent a greater national community in comparison to all other nations.'[126]

On the other hand, the majority of Serbian political parties, both in the Kingdom of Serbia and in the South Slav Austro-Hungarian provinces, were motivated by a purely Serbian, and not Yugoslav, nationalism. This is clear from a perusal of school textbooks from Serbia in the period from 1878 to 1914: Serbian geography, history and literature textbooks made virtually no reference to the existence of a separate Croatian people or culture, but rather, to a 'Catholic' or 'Western' branch of the Serbian nation, while all the historic Croatian provinces were claimed as Serbian.[127] As Serbia was an independent state with close political links to France, Britain and Russia, the notion of the 'Serbian' racial identity of the Croats was readily accepted by most Western scholars and writers.[128] Croat Yugoslavists themselves had helped to foster such a view. The internationally renowned Croat sculptor Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) created works of art based on specifically Serbian historical themes and figures (such as the folk hero Prince Marko/Kraljević Marko) and was praised as the leading proponent of Yugoslav 'racial art.'[129]

At the same time, the study of the precise ethnic and anthropological composition of the South Slavs remained a somewhat complex matter in Western academic discourses. In his description of the Slavic language family, for example, Joseph Deniker noted that the 'southern group' of Slavs comprised 'the Slovenes . . . and the Serbo-Croats, known by the name of Khorvates in Hungary, of Serbs in Servia, of Morlaks, Uskoks, etc., in Dalmatia, of Herzogovinians, Bosnians, Montenegrins . . .'[130] Deniker had, however, pointed to a possible racial distinction between the Croats and/or western South Slavs on the one hand, and Serbs in Serbia on the other. Thus, while he regarded the population of Dalmatia, Bosnia and Croatia as the 'purest representatives' of the Adriatic/Dinaric race, the Serbians of Serbia proper were only 'probably' marked by the 'same [Dinaric] characters, somewhat softened.'[131] Since the South Slav area as a whole was considered the central home of the Dinaric race, the question arose as to whether the Dinarics were more strongly represented among the Croats

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126 Behschnitt, *Nationalismus bei Serben und Kroaten*, 51.

127 Charles Jelavich, 'Serbian Textbooks: Toward Greater Serbia or Yugoslavia?', *Slavic Review*, 42, No. 4 (1983): 601–619.

128 Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, 136.

129 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 103, 202–205.

130 Deniker, *Races of Man*, 344–345.

131 Ibid., 333–334.

or among the Serbs. This question became a source of intense debate in the intellectual discourse on race in interwar Yugoslavia.

In 1902 the Paris trained Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865–1927) had argued that the Dinaric, or what he initially referred to as the 'patriarchal', ethnographic-racial type, was most widespread among the Serbs and north Albanians.[132] According to Cvijić, the patriarchal type included the 'physically strongest' tribes and peoples of the Balkan peninsula. The patriarchal type was characterised by strength, tall height, a slender build and 'falcon eyes', and was 'the most beautiful race on the Balkan Peninsula.' Cvijić argued that the 'chivalrous' patriarchal (Dinaric) type stood in stark contrast to 'the peoples and tribes of Byzantine-Tzintzar culture.'[133] The Tzintzars (*Cincari*) were a predominantly urban Balkan community of Greek-speaking Vlachs. Similarly to Truhelka and Pilar, Cvijić viewed the Vlachs as a foreign element in the racial body of the South Slavs. The Yugoslavist Slovenian ethnologist Niko Županič (1876–1961) regarded the inhabitants of the 'Byzantine-Tzintzar' towns as the representatives of a typical degenerative type found in most cities all over Europe. In a study from 1903 Županič argued that the Byzantine-Tzintzar dwellers of the Ottoman Balkan towns (known collectively as the *čaršija*) were usually recognisable by their 'stooping and emaciated figures.'[134] Županič was keen to show that the South Slavs had, in contrast to the Albanians and Greeks, retained a good deal of their original Nordic blood. In an anthropological work from 1908 he argued that the early medieval Slav settlers in the Balkans had been of Nordic physical appearance (blond and dolichocephalic), but through admixture with the earlier inhabitants of the Balkans, they had acquired the Dinaric features of dark hair and broad skulls.[135] Nevertheless, the South Slavs still possessed a greater Nordic racial element than the Greeks and Albanians, and for Županič, this justified the future political mastery of the South Slavs over the other Balkan peoples.[136]

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[132] Christian Promitzer, 'Vermessene Körper: "Rassenkundliche" Grenzziehungen im südöstlichen Europa.' In *Europa und die Grenzen im Kopf*, Karl Kaser, Dagmar Gramshammer-Hohl and Robert Pichler eds. (Klagenfurt: Wieser Enzyklopädie des europäischen Ostens II, 2003), 377.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Ibid., 378.

[135] Ibid., 378–379.

[136] See ibid and Promitzer, 'The Body of the Other', 33–34.

Racial Yugoslavism and the Croatian Peasant Party

In spite of the intellectual efforts of Truhelka and Pilar, racial Yugoslavism continued to be a major ideological plank of most Croatian political parties in the early twentieth century. In particular, the brothers Antun (1868–1919) and Stjepan Radić (1871–1928), who founded the Croatian Peasant Party in 1904, developed the influential theory of the racially innate pacifism of the Slavs. This idea of racial Yugoslavism, however, was quite different to the Serbian-centred patriarchal and Dinaric (or Nordic-Dinaric) type of Yugoslavism as espoused by Cvijić and Županič. The Peasant Party was committed to the economic, social, political and cultural betterment of the Croatian peasantry.[137] The Party would dominate Croatian politics in the intewar period and lead the national struggle against Serbian hegemony in the new Yugoslav state.[138]

The Radić brothers viewed the peasantry as the true *narod* (people) and foundation of Croatian national culture rather than the Croat aristocracy and urban middle class, or what they termed the *gospoda* (gentlemen/nobility), with their Latin/Germanic culture.[139] In the tradition of Illyrianism and the Yugoslavist National Party, the Peasant Party's political program was split between 'political Croatism' and 'cultural Yugoslavism.'[140] Like Gaj and Strossmayer before them, Antun and Stjepan Radić used the terms *narod* and *pleme* to simultaneously describe Croats, Yugoslavs and Slavs. In an article from 1902 entitled 'The Croats', Antun Radić argued that the Croats belonged to the Slavic and South Slavic 'tribes.'[141] Yet the Croats were also a separate people or *narod*, because they had distinct political traditions and aims: 'Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats and Slovenes—they are one tribe, but they are not one people. They are not one people, for they do not have one idea, one desire, one aspiration.'[142] Radić also seems to have more or less accepted Starčević's notion that all South Slavs were Croats, because he claimed that from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, 'one language was spoken', Croatian. At the same time, he specifically

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[137] For more on the Croatian Peasant Party, see Mark Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904–1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

[138] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 226–260.

[139] Elinor Murray Despalatovic, 'The Peasant Nationalism of Ante Radić', *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 5, No. 1 (1978): 90.

[140] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 104, and Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 99.

[141] Antun Radić, *Sabrana djela VIII* (Zagreb: Dom, 1937), 7.

[142] Ibid., 8.

defined the Croat lands as Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Istria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as adding (in the spirit of Starčević) the Slovene provinces.[143] According to Radić, 'we Slavs are all of one blood and somewhere our ancestors had herded sheep under one sky.'[144] The South Slavs were the 'guardians' of Europe, defending it from 'Asiatic barbarians and conquerors.'[145] However, the 'Asiatic flood' had unfortunately 'corrupted' the blood, customs and language of the South Slavs living along the Black Sea, who had even adopted an 'Asiatic name'—the Bulgarians.[146]

In an article from 1909, Stjepan Radić (who was the actual leader of the Peasant Party) would similarly argue that 'from an ethnic and linguistic perspective, all Slavs are actually one people and of one nationality.'[147] Stjepan Radić was a committed pacifist and, in the tradition of Herder and the Czech intellectual František Palacký (1798–1876), considered democracy to be a characteristic trait of the Slavs.[148] Nevertheless, the Radić brothers looked to the strongest Slavic state, Russia, as the overall protector of all Slavs, especially in the face of the perceived threat of German and Austrian political and military expansionism toward the East and South-East (*Drang nach Osten*).[149] For the Slavophile Radić brothers, the Greco-Roman heritage of modern Western European civilisation was not only alien to Croatian Slavic peasant culture, but had also given that civilisation some of its worst traits, such as 'the idea of superiority, imperialism, mechanization, megalomania, the idea of the state as an organization of power and force', and 'the system of official and aristocratic Christianity.'[150]

Another important element of Antun and Stjepan Radić's racial pan-Slavism was their so-called 'a-Semitism.' The Radić brothers viewed the small minority of Croatian Jews, who were concentrated largely in the towns and cities of northern Croatia, as an urban element alien to Slavic-Croatian peasant culture and life. Stjepan and Antun Radić identified the Jews with the worst social and political aspects of urban life, above all with

143 Ibid., 7, 9.
144 Ibid., 8.
145 Ibid., 7.
146 Ibid., 7–8.
147 Cited in Tihomir Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države u političkoj misli Stjepana Radića* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2001), 39.
148 Ibid., 88.
149 Ibid., 89.
150 Dinko Tomašić, 'Sociology in Yugoslavia', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 47 (1941–1942): 61.

the political ideologies of capitalism and socialism. According to Stjepan Radić, the Jews were attracted to these two ideologies because they could not comprehend the 'fundamentals of every civilization: property and state.'[151] The Jews could not comprehend these 'fundamentals' because they possessed no homeland of their own. Accordingly, the Jews espoused either socialism or capitalism—the former because it was internationalist and in favour of collective property ownership, the latter because the Jew would rather have money than property.[152] Although the 'a-Semitism' of the Radić brothers was mainly economic, social and religious in its nature, they were uncomfortable with the idea of Jewish assimilation. The Jew was tainted because he belonged to the city and not to the countryside.[153]

The aversion of the Radić brothers toward the assimilation of Jews was apparent in their hostility toward Starčević's successor, Josip Frank. It made no difference that Frank had converted to the Catholic faith, for 'the Jew remains a Jew.' Antun Radić was thus opposed to the Jewish adoption of 'nice, old and honourable' Croatian surnames.[154] In 1906 Stjepan Radić penned an article entitled 'Jewry as a Negative Element of Culture,' in which he examined the book *Geschlecht und Charakter* ('Sex and Character'), written by the converted Austrian Jew Otto Weininger (1880–1903).[155] Radić argued that with its 'richness and depth of thought and logic of facts', Weininger's book could only be compared with Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*.[156] Radić's article contained long translated passages of Weininger's book, starting with an anthropological description of the Jews, who (in Weininger's words) 'appear to be related, to some degree, to Blacks and Mongols.' Weininger himself was more interested in the 'psychological side of Jewry': this Jewish psychology was marked by an immoral, soulless and earthbound materialism devoid of any transcendental values.[157]

In the conclusion to his article Radić wrote:

> As true Christians, we cannot in any way be anti-Semites according to the German model; but as a people, to whom even Western Europe recognises the greatest strength and depth of morality, we cannot and must not allow

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[151] Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, 53.
[152] Ibid., 53, 76.
[153] Ibid., 77.
[154] Ibid.
[155] 'Židovstvo kao negativni elemenat kulture' (1906). Reprinted as Stjepan Radić, *O Židovima* (Kamnik: Slatnar, 1938).
[156] Ibid., 6.
[157] Ibid., 6–15.

> any member of Jewry, whether Semitic or Aryan, to be our national representative and leader. Instead of anti-Semitism, we should therefore strictly carry out a-Semitism: instead of an unworthy struggle against the Jews, [we must carry out] unremitting work without the Jews.[158]

The Peasant Party's 'a-Semitism' would later be adopted, and further radicalised, by the Ustasha movement.

According to the Peasant Party, the Croats had to closely ally themselves with the other Slavic peoples of the Habsburg Monarchy, and further their links with the Slavs outside of the Monarchy. As the Peasant Party's official program stated, the South Slavs constitute 'one national and economic entity, and we Croats consider Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria as our national states.' Furthermore, the Slavs were worth something in the eyes of the world due mainly to the influence of Russia.[159] The Croatian Peasant Party was still clinging to the romantic notions of nineteenth-century racial pan-Slavism.

Conclusion

The theory of Vlach-Serbian racial admixture, as articulated by both Truhelka and Pilar, sought to intellectually demolish the ideology of racial Yugoslavism (and Greater Serbianism). In a political sense, Truhelka and Pilar adhered to Starčević's main ideological tenets, but they departed from Starčević in one important respect. Starčević's rejection of Yugoslavism, and any form of pan-Slavism for that matter, was based largely on the argument that the 'Slavs' did not exist in a racial, anthropological or ethnic sense. For Truhelka and Pilar, however, the Aryan-Slavic ethnolinguistic and racial origin of the majority of Croats was an anthropological fact. In contrast to the Croat Yugoslavists, however, they used this theory in order to erect a barrier between Slav-speaking Croats and Serbs, since the latter had apparently lost their original Aryan-Slavic racial character due to extensive admixture with the Vlachs. Interestingly, the theme of the corrupting influence of Vlach (or Tzintzar) blood on the South Slavic racial composition found echoes in the ethnographic and anthropological works of Yugoslavist and Serbian nationalist intellectuals such as Niko Županič and Jovan Cvijić.

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158 Ibid., 16.

159 'Što hoće Hrvatska Pučka Seljačka Stranka?' In Antun Radić, *Sabrana djela VII* (Zagreb: Seljački nauk, 1936), 18.

Truhelka and Pilar had, in an intellectual sense, provided a detailed theory of Croat ethnolinguistic/racial authenticity in relation to the Serbs. Pilar's work did, however, contain a seeming intellectual inconsistency: he claimed that the Croats were a conquering, state-building people of Slavic origin, but also argued that the Slavs possessed weak political and organisational talents due to inborn racial traits.[160] Pilar sought to overcome this contradiction by stressing the Aryan-Nordic origins of the Slavs. He thus regularly referred to the *Aryan*-Slavic Croats, and, among the Slavs, only the Croats (and Poles) were able to 'raise themselves from peasants' and form their own aristocratic elites (although it is not entirely clear how they managed this). By stressing their Aryan racial identity, Pilar sought to link the Croats closely with the Germanic peoples and also with the Aryan Persians. Indeed, during the interwar period, Pilar and other Croat intellectuals would take an increasing interest in the question of the cultural, spiritual and racial links between the old Slavs/Croats and Iranians.

[160] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 7.

CHAPTER FOUR

YUGOSLAVIST AND SERBIAN RACIAL THEORIES IN THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA

Introduction

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was founded in December 1918 upon the notions of ethnic-racial homogeneity derived from nineteenth-century Romanticism. According to the British Slavophile activist Fanny Copeland (1872–1970), 'from the ordeal of war, pestilence, famine and persecution, the Yugo-Slavs have emerged as one people, as homogeneous as they were when they first descended from the Carpathians.'[1] The Yugoslavist Croat political elite had approved of the unification of the Austro-Hungarian South Slav provinces with the Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro because the 'modern principle of nationality', according to which the Croats were an integral part of the South Slav ethnolinguistic nation, logically demanded the establishment of one nation state for the 'Yugo-Slavs.'[2] Very soon, however, life in the new state, renamed Yugoslavia in 1929, only highlighted more clearly the glaring differences between Croatian and Serbian political and cultural traditions.[3] The Serbs, with more than a century of political experience in running an independent state, and motivated by an expansionist ideology that aimed to unite all Serbs into one state, pursued a policy of centralisation.[4] The Croats, on the other hand, were historically accustomed to a federalised state system that safeguarded Croatia's traditional autonomy, and wanted equality with Serbia.[5] Croatian national aspirations were not met; no separate Croat administrative entity existed before 1939. From 1929, after the introduction of dictatorial rule by King Aleksandar Karadjordjević, Croatia was divided between the *Banovina* ('banates' or regions) of Savska (northern

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1 Cited in Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, 11.
2 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 128.
3 Ibid., 141–153.
4 Ibid., 214–225.
5 Trifković, 'The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism, 355.

Croatia), Primorska (most of the coastline) and Zetska (southern Dalmatia with Montenegro). Croatia was simply wiped off the map.[6]

The Trinomial South Slavic Nation

A wide gulf soon arose between Croats and Serbs, since the new South Slav state bore an undeniably dominant Serbian political and cultural stamp. The state was headed by the Serbian royal dynasty of Karadjordjević, while the new army, which had widespread martial powers in the early years of the state, was based entirely on the former Serbian army (including uniforms, regulations and its predominantly Serbian officer corps).[7] The official ideology of the 'trinomial Yugoslav nation', whereby Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were considered three equal 'tribes' of one 'people', in reality implied the Serbianisation of administration and culture throughout Yugoslavia; for example, the 'Serbian ekavian [dialect] was pushed through as Yugoslavia's official language, most often in Cyrillic garb.'[8]

Leading Serbian nationalists (who led the two dominant Yugoslav political parties, the Democrats and Radicals) soon came around to the belief that they could eventually assimilate the Croats to Serbian nationhood through the ideology of Yugoslavism, for this ideology would extinguish a separate Croatian, but not Serbian, identity, as the Serbs were politically and numerically much stronger than the Croats.[9] In any case, both Yugoslav unitarists and Greater Serbian nationalists were in favour of a strongly centralised state, which in effect implied the supremacy of Belgrade and Serbia.[10] There existed, all the same, some tension between the ideologies of Greater Serbianism and Yugoslavist unitarism. For example, sincere British supporters of Yugoslav unification in the pre-war period, such as Henry Wickham-Steed (1871–1956) and R. W. Seton-Watson (1879–1951), considered a single state for the South Slavs as completely natural, but opposed Serbian hegemony in the new state because they, like the Yugoslavist Croat politician Ante Trumbić (1864–1938), viewed it as an obstacle to the 'internal harmony of a homogeneous race.'[11]

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[6] Malcolm, *Bosnia,* 169.

[7] Banac, *National Question,* 150–151.

[8] Ibid., 212. Also see Marko Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1993), 9–12.

[9] Banac, *National Question*, 163–164.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 132–133. Also see Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, 125.

The leading Yugoslav unitarist was the first Minister of the Interior, Svetozar Pribićević (1875–1936), whose first and foremost aim was to secure the equality of Croatia's Serbs with the Croats 'by destroying Croat nationhood.'[12] Pribićević ensured that administrative and governmental posts were firmly in Serbian hands, countering Croatian claims of discrimination by arguing that 'Croats were one people with the Serbs, requiring no special protection, enjoying the same rights as the Serbs, hence there [was] no Croat question in relation to the Serbs.'[13] Pribićević and other Yugoslavist ideologists believed that the substantial cultural differences between the Croats and Serbs were the result of historical and geographical 'accidents': in other words, due to geography, the Croats happened to convert to Western Christianity, while the Serbs embraced Eastern Orthodoxy. Aggressive foreign influences, namely Austrian, Italian and Hungarian in Croatia, and Ottoman in Serbia, also played their part in dividing the once 'homogeneous' South Slav peoples.[14] The royalist regime in Belgrade aimed to return the 'lost' homogeneity of the South Slavs by eradicating a separate Croatian national identity through the assimilation of the Croats to 'pure' Slavic Serbian nationhood.

Unitarist Yugoslavists tended to regard Serbian Orthodoxy as an ideological and historical pillar of the Yugoslav state, in spite of their indifference or even hostility toward religious dogma. Although there were also Catholic clericalists in Croatia who promoted the Yugoslav idea (notably the Croatian People's Party), in general, Yugoslavist ideologists could not help but view Roman Catholicism as opposed, by its very nature, to Eastern Slavdom.[15] The sentimental attachment to Serbian Orthodoxy also helps to explain the generally negative attitude Yugoslavist ideologues displayed toward Islam and the Bosnian Muslims in particular. Yugoslavist ideologists belittled the culture of the South Slav Muslims. In 1924 the Yugoslavist novelist Ivo Andrić (1892–1975) wrote a 'bitterly anti-Muslim treatise on Ottoman Bosnian culture', in which he concluded that 'the effect of Turkish rule was absolutely negative', and that 'the Turks could bring no cultural content or sense of higher mission, even to those South Slavs who accepted Islam.'[16]

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[12] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 184.
[13] Cited in ibid., 185.
[14] Ibid., 180–181.
[15] Ibid., 349–351, 411–413.
[16] Cited in Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 100.

Yugoslavia became a state in which a 'core' or 'dominant' *ethnie*, in other words the Serbs, governed over the other 'peripheral' *ethnies*, namely the Croats.[17] The Yugoslavist experiment was flawed from the start because of its primary reliance on a reductionist definition of nationhood: the criterion of language as the essential mark of ethnic-racial identity, in other words, language = ethnicity/nation/race and this equals one nation state.[18] Consequently, during the 1920s and 1930s, Yugoslavist intellectuals sought to give the idea of Yugoslav national identity a firm anthropological basis. In doing so, Yugoslavist ideologists promoted the idea of a common Dinaric racial identity that included all Yugoslavs (or at least their vital 'Serbo-Croat' core element). As Christian Promizter remarks:

> When considering this relationship between "racial science" and nation building, one has to have in mind that the territorial aspirations of national elites in the Balkans included regions that were not ethnically homogenous [sic]. This homogeneity, however, could be postulated by "racial science", so that different South Slavic national groups—Serbs, Croats and Slovenes—could be moulded into one single nation.[19]

The Patriarchal Serbian/Yugoslav Dinaric Type

Leading Yugoslavist intellectuals thus attempted to base the idea of Yugoslav 'homogeneity' on a firm racial concept of nationhood. This is clear from the position Yugoslavist ideologues adopted on the question of the racial identity of the Bulgarian people. Although the Bulgarians spoke a South Slav language, they were not considered true Yugoslavs due to the fact that the proto-Bulgars had been a Turkic people. Yugoslavist ideologists also argued that the Slavicised Bulgars had extensively interbred with other Asiatic or Turanian peoples throughout their history. The theory of the predominant Turanian racial identity of the Bulgarians had been advanced by Serbia's leading scholars since the early twentieth century, most notably by Jovan Cvijić. According to Cvijić, the Bulgars belonged to the 'East Balkan type' and were a racial mixture of Thracians, Slavs, three Turanian ethnic groups (Bulgars, Patzinak-Cumans and Turks) and Vlachs, leading Cvijić to conclude that the Bulgars were distinct from other South

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[17] Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, 61.

[18] George Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (London: Hurst & Company, 2000), 330.

[19] Promitzer, 'The Body of the Other', 29–30.

Slavs in their ethnic make-up.[20] Cvijić, however, also distinguished different ethnographic types among the Yugoslavs themselves. He defined these types upon the basis of extensive ethnographic field research he carried out between 1887 and 1915.[21]

On the basis of his research findings, Cvijić formulated an elaborate ethnographic and anthropogeographic theory to explain the peculiarities of South Slav culture and way of life. His theory was to have a strong influence on subsequent anthropological, historical and sociological studies on the South Slavs (both in and outside the Balkans). Cvijić promoted the idea of the common Dinaric racial identity of the Yugoslavs. In that sense, one could describe him as a Yugoslav nationalist, but Cvijić also considered the 'Serbian type' of Dinaric man as the core or leading component of the South Slavs. Cvijić first published his research findings and theory in his influential work, first published in French in 1918, *La Péninsule Balkanique* (and subsequently translated into Serbian in 1922).

According to Cvijić, 'the whole Dinaric area is populated by the same race.'[22] Due to numerous historical migrations, the 'Dinaric type of man' was also located far outside the Dinaric mountain zone, so that Dinarics could be found to the north of the Sava, Danube and Kupa Rivers in the fertile plains of northern Croatia and northern Serbia.[23] The 'original and exceedingly patriotic' Dinaric man belonged to 'a patriarchal stage of culture' and 'is untouched by contact with foreign peoples or civilisations.' Such characteristics separated the Dinaric man from the other main ethnographic types found among the South Slavs, notably the Pannonian and Mediterranean/coastal types. Cvijić claimed that two-thirds of the population of the Dinaric area were Serbs, and 'the best example of the really pure patriarchal Dinaric type is certainly the Serbian variety.'[24] He listed the main psychological characteristics of the Dinaric Serb as following: sensitivity, lively temperament, idealism, honour, the desire to fight for freedom and justice, heroism, and a strong link with nature

[20] Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 311.

[21] See Karl Kaser, 'Planinski ljudi, ravničarski ljudi: Prostor i etnografska reprezentacija.' In Tihomir Cipek and Josip Vrandečić eds. *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2007), 233.

[22] I have relied on the following work for a summary of Cvijić's main ideas: Jovan Cvijić, 'Studies in Jugoslav Psychology' (Trans. Fanny Foster), *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 9 (1930–31): 375. This article is a partial translation of a volume of Cvijić's speeches and articles published in 1921.

[23] Ibid., 377.

[24] Ibid., 377–378.

and one's ancestors.[25] Cvijić argued that these characteristics 'appear in the normal life of all Jugoslavs, but in the case of the Serbs they have a special connection with their consciousness of nationality.'[26] Indeed, it was the Dinaric Serb who had attained 'the highest degree of heroism, on account of their consciousness of nationality and because history has given them a special mission as a State.'[27] The quintessential Serb Dinaric heroes of the past were the *hajduks*, the brigands and outlaws who had fought the Turks.[28]

Cvijić's theory distinguished between two 'psychological types' of Dinaric man—the northern and southern. The northern type consisted of the regions of Serbia proper, Bosnia, north Herzegovina and the area of Lika in Croatia; the southern type was found in the mountainous areas along the Adriatic, including Montenegro, south Herzegovina and the Dalmatian hinterland.[29] According to Cvijić, the southern type had lost much of its Dinaric character due to the strong influence of 'Romano-Mediterranean culture.' In contrast, the northern type was 'the best example of the combined Dinaric qualities.'[30] The best component of the northern Dinaric type was the 'Šumadijan' group, named after the central Serbian region of Šumadija.[31] Cvijić argued that this Šumadijan group had established the Serbian state in the early nineteenth century. At the same time, he claimed that the Šumadijan variety was not 'purely of the Serbian Dinaric mountain type', for 'they have formed a new and powerful ethnic combination of the qualities of both [northern and southern] groups with the addition of certain others as well.'[32] The Šumadijan ethnographic type was characterised by a strong national consciousness, healthy democracy, spiritual and moral bravery, and a capacity for intellectual and ideational development.[33] Cvijić envisioned a future Dinaric Yugoslavia that would be led by its most capable component: the Dinaric-Šumadijan Serbian.

Cvijić's approach to South Slav ethnography and anthropology was in essence an anthropogeographic one. He defined this approach as the 'study of the psychic constitution' of peoples in various natural environments

[25] Ibid., 378–383.
[26] Ibid., 382.
[27] Ibid., 383.
[28] Ibid., 381, 383.
[29] Ibid., 662.
[30] Ibid., 663.
[31] Ibid., 664.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 664–665.

(i.e. the influences of geographic factors).[34] Cvijić also considered the influences of historical, ethnic and social elements on the development of human psyches. Geographic factors were of predominant concern to Cvijić: such factors specifically included climate and soil characteristics, natural resources and settlement patterns, forms of economy, food, clothing and so on.[35] He thus paid little attention to the classic taxonomies (Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine and so on) employed by racial anthropologists.

The Yugoslavist Croat ethnographer Vladimir Dvorniković (1888–1956) also stressed the future leading role of the predominantly Dinaric 'Yugoslav' race, which was 'one of the most naturally gifted peoples of Europe.'[36] In his influential study from 1939 entitled 'The Characteriology of the Yugoslavs', Dvorniković constructed—similarly to Cvijić—an ideal Yugoslav racial type upon the basis of geographical, psychological and anthropological arguments. This ideal type was based on the theory of a common Dinaric racial identity. Dvorniković portrayed the Dinaric man as particularly virile and masculine: 'The Dinaric type is the prototype of the male warrior, perhaps the most outstanding amongst all the white races . . . This Illyrian man must be raw, strong and martial.'[37] Like Cvijić before him, Dvorniković praised the heroic exploits of the *hajduks*. Although he was a Yugoslavist (and Yugoslavism was, historically speaking, a narrower form of pan-Slavism) Dvorniković's concept of the 'Illyrian' Dinaric race actually created a distinct line of separation between the South Slavs, on the one hand, and the West and East Slavs, on the other, for the martial and, in essence, pagan Dinaric man was 'a warrior of the Balkan, not Slav-Christian soul.'[38]

During the 1920s and 1930s, other Yugoslavist intellectuals would employ traditional racial classifications and prevailing theories of race (defined as a group marked by hereditary biological and psychological characteristics) in their attempts to fashion a common Dinaric and/or Nordic-Dinaric racial identity for the Yugoslavs. Branimir Maleš, a leading pro-Serbian Croat anthropologist, praised the virtues of the Dinaric and Nordic races and stressed their central place in Yugoslav racial identity and history. Maleš accepted the general view of racial anthropologists, according to which all nations were mixtures of several races, but argued (in an

[34] Kaser, 'Planinski ljudi, ravničarski ljudi', 231.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Cited in Yeomans, '"Of Yugoslav Barbarians"', 94.
[37] Cited in ibid., 95.
[38] Cited in ibid., 96.

article from 1935) that every nation possessed dominant racial characteristics. In the case of the Yugoslavs it was clear that the Dinaric race was the predominant race due to its 'biological predominance.'[39] The Dinaric race was found in all areas settled by Serbs and Croats, but particularly in Herzegovina, Montenegro and, to a lesser extent, Lika.[40] Dinaric characteristics, Maleš maintained, were almost always dominant, so that racial crossing between the Dinaric and other races usually led to the dominant inheritance of Dinaric racial traits; upon the basis of this view, Maleš concluded that one could speak of the 'biological and ethnic homogeneity of the Dinaric race.'[41] Maleš did not forget to point out that German scholars held great admiration for the Dinaric race and regarded its physical and mental characteristics as equal to those of the Nordic race.[42]

Maleš stressed the racial links between the Dinaric and Nordic races, and he was particularly interested in the type he referred to as the 'fair Dinarics', which probably developed from a Nordic-Dinaric racial admixture. In an article from 1939 Maleš attempted to confirm the Aryan origin of the medieval founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church, St. Sava, and that of his family, the ruling Nemanjić dynasty.[43] On the basis of an observation of medieval frescoes (which depict the members of the medieval Serbian royal dynasty), Maleš argued that members of the Nemanjić family had been tall with fair hair and a fair complexion, and were thus pure Aryans, or more specifically fair Dinarics.[44] The pro-Serb anthropologist also relied upon the arguments of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who not only regarded the original Slavs as being of pure Germanic race, but also spoke highly of Serbian epic folk poetry, centred on the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, and related it to the themes of Celtic and Germanic epic and lyric poetry ('loyalty unto death, heroic courage, heroic women' and 'personal honour').[45] Interestingly, Ivo Pilar had also referred to the Nordic-Aryan appearance of St. Sava, depicting him as 'blue-eyed and fair-haired' (this was, of course, in line with Pilar's theory that the original Serbs were a pure Aryan-Slavic people).[46]

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[39] Ilija Malović, 'Eugenika kao ideološki sastojak fašizma u Srbiji 1930-ih godina XX veka', *Sociologija*, L, No. 1 (2008): 88.
[40] Ibid., 5fn, 88.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 88.
[43] See ibid., 90.
[44] Ibid.
[45] See ibid. and Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, 506.
[46] Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 54.

The South Slavs and German Racial Anthropology

In Croatia, the theory of the core Nordic-Dinaric racial identity of the Yugoslavs was mainly promoted by the Croat-Slovenian biologist Boris Zarnik, a professor of biology at the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb. Zarnik was interested in racial biology, eugenics, evolutionary theory and anthropology, and he keenly followed the latest developments in human biology and genetics. By the 1920s new developments in the science of genetics had highlighted the 'increasing uncertainty about the status of anthropological features such as hair colour and skull shape.'[47] Under the influence of Mendel's laws of inheritance, many scientists began to view race as a 'set of hereditary features', which were inherited independently of one another, so that there was no necessary direct correlation between the observable physical and behavioural characteristics of a person (phenotype) and the totality of the inherited genetic constitution of that person (genotype).[48] Nevertheless, traditional racial taxonomies continued to be employed by physical anthropologists and (to a lesser extent) by geneticists and biologists.

Zarnik, for his part, argued that the Yugoslavs contained a Nordic-Dinaric racial core that had preserved the essential physical and psychological traits of the South Slavs throughout the centuries. In an article on 'The Racial Composition of the European Population', published in a Croat cultural journal in 1927, Zarnik outlined the basic argument for a theory of South Slav racial distinctiveness:

> Apart from Sweden, no other state in Europe has a population with such a relatively equal racial composition as our land, which . . . shows everywhere the same Dinaric-Nordic core. The superhuman deeds of bravery and daring, of which the history of the South Slavs is filled from the oldest ages until today, shows that our racial composition produces the most excellent virtues . . .[49]

Zarnik's praise of the Nordic-Dinaric racial virtues of the South Slavs was more or less in line with the arguments of racial anthropologists in Western countries, notably Germany and Austria. The discipline of racial anthropology had offered Yugoslavist nationalist ideologists a seemingly

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[47] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 25.

[48] Ibid., 31–32.

[49] Boris Zarnik, 'O rasnom sastavu evropskog pučanstva', *Hrvatsko kolo*, 8 (1927): 79–80.

effective intellectual instrument with which to establish the distinction and relative purity of South Slav/Serbo-Croat racial origins and identity. Zarnik's comment that only Sweden could offer a comparable example of relative racial homogeneity reflected a widespread idea among racial anthropologists, namely, that Scandinavia was one of the few places in Europe in which there was a strong congruence between race, geography and language (i.e. the Nordic type, Scandinavia and Germanic languages).[50] In the case of the Dinaric race, its purest representatives were said to be found in the South Slav or 'Serbo-Croat' linguistic area of the Dinaric Alps.

Zarnik had, nevertheless, taken into account the question of race mixing, for he had argued that a Nordic-Dinaric racial mixture represented the core of the South Slavs. In his article from 1927 Zarnik had argued that, out of a total of 48 chromosomes, the average or typical South Slav inherited 23 Dinaric, 15 Nordic, 7 Alpine, 2 Mediterranean chromosomes and 1 Mongol chromosome; this genetic structure was similar to that of the average south German and north Italian.[51] Racial anthropologists had long argued that, generally speaking, there was little congruence between racial type and language in Europe, while the nationalist concept of a united people or *Volk* could not mask the fact that all peoples consisted of mixtures of several main races. Therefore, a strong distinction had to be made between nation/people (*Volk*), defined as an ethnolinguistic and cultural group, on the one hand, and the anthropological-biological grouping of race (*Rasse*) on the other.[52] During the 1920s and 1930s the theoretical distinction between people and race was accepted as 'academic orthodoxy' by leading race theorists and anthropologists in Europe, above all in Germany.[53]

The race theorist and anthropologist Hans F. K. Günther (1891–1968) was the main populariser of racial anthropology in Germany during the interwar period, and his theories (as well as those of other German racial anthropologists) had a marked influence on racial studies in Yugoslavia, including those of Zarnik. Günther stressed the importance of being on 'guard against confusing Race and People (generally marked by a common language), or Race and Nationality, or (as in the case of the

[50] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 25, 32.
[51] Zarnik, 'O rasnom sastavu evropskog pučanstva', 71.
[52] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 17–25.
[53] Ibid., 23–24.

Jewish people) Blood kinship and Faith.'[54] Therefore, there was no such thing as a Germanic or Slavic race, or a German or Spanish race, nor for that matter was there any such 'white' or 'Caucasian race.'[55] As Günther explained, 'a race shows itself in a human group which is marked off from every other human group through its own proper combination of bodily and mental characteristics, and in turn produces only its like.'[56]

According to Günther, six races made up—in varying degrees—the composition of the Germans and other European peoples: the Nordic (tall, slender, blond and long-headed), Mediterranean (short, slender, dark and long-headed), Dinaric (tall, thin, dark and round-headed with a long face), Alpine or Eastern (short, heavy-set, dark and round-headed), East Baltic (short, heavy-set, light pigmentation and round-headed) and the Phalian (tall, solid, fair, long-headed with a broad face).[57] These six races represented ideal or pure racial types, which in reality no longer existed (or only rarely existed) due to the great deal of intermixture that had occurred between these races in Europe throughout history. However, there still existed, argued Günther, a large degree of correlation between certain regions and the ideal physical characteristics of the individual races: for example, the inhabitants of northwestern Europe, particularly Scandinavia, tended to exhibit the correlated features of fair hair, tall stature, light eyes and long heads and faces, so that one could point to the prevalence of the Nordic race in that region.[58] Thus, one could speak of 'relatively homogeneous human groups in definite areas,' and, accordingly, establish the physical and mental characteristics of a race from a detailed study of those human groups.[59]

Günther was particularly keen to stress the importance of the physical and spiritual characteristics of the Nordic race. In general, there was a strong tendency among racial anthropologists to extol the Nordic race as the most superior racial type among Europeans, although Günther did not

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[54] Hans F. K. Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*. Trans. G. C. Wheeler (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1927), 2.

[55] Ibid., 1.

[56] Ibid., 3.

[57] See chapter four, 'Hans Günther and Racial Anthropology', in Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 35–48. In the translated work from 1927 cited above, *The Racial Elements of European History*, Günther spoke of five European races (Nordic, Mediterranean, Dinaric, Alpine and East Baltic). Günther, *Racial Elements of European History*, 3–4. By 1933 he had added the Phalian race (as well as adding the Sudetan race at times). Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 36.

[58] Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*, 4–8.

[59] Ibid., 8.

explicitly claim superiority for the Nordic race.[60] The Nordic man was thus marked by energy, boldness, prudence, steadfastness, calm judgment and possessed 'a yearning towards the sublime and heroic, towards extraordinary deeds and works calling for a life's devotion.'[61] The Nordic man was most at home in nature and found it difficult to adjust to an urban setting. The Nordics also showed military aptitude due to their 'warlike spirit.'[62]

The Nordic race was ideally suited to the political art of building states, and all the great statesmen in European history would appear 'to be predominantly Nordic.'[63] Günther claimed that the Nordic race was the original bearer of all the Indo-European (Indo-Germanic) languages. It was the Nordic race that had created all the great civilisations and cultures of antiquity found in all parts of Europe and Asia where Indo-European languages were spoken. Günther thus identified the original Hellenes, Romans, Indians and Persians as racially Nordic. These Nordic peoples had, beginning in the Neolitihic period, left their original homeland in north-western Europe and conquered lands and peoples throughout southern Europe and parts of Asia.[64] In Italy and Greece, Günther argued, the Nordic Hellenes and Romans formed a new ruling class and forced their Indo-European speech onto the 'subject, mainly [racially] Mediterranean lower orders.'[65]

Similarly, the Nordic Hindus and Persians (who appear to have long been settled in south-east Europe) conquered territory spreading east and southeast from the Indus River: in these conquered lands, the Nordic Indians and Persians also formed the ruling elites of a predominantly Asiatic racial population (belonging largely to the Near Eastern and Oriental races, as well as other 'dark races').[66] Unfortunately, Günther remarked, the great civilisations created by these Nordic peoples eventually fell apart or degenerated due to the numerical inferiority of the Nordic ruling classes, and the descendants of the Nordic conquerors ended up interbreeding with the lower non-Nordic orders. In the case of the Nordic Hindus, Hellenes, Persians and Romans, their disappearance from the stage of world history was hastened by the fact that they were 'cut off from the original Nordic region' in northern and central Europe, so that 'a renewal

60 Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 24, 55.
61 Günther, *Racial Elements of European History*, 51–53.
62 Ibid., 53–55.
63 Ibid., 52.
64 Ibid., 122–126.
65 Ibid., 123.
66 Ibid., 133–152.

of the Nordic blood within these southern peoples was impossible.' In short, 'every "fall" of a people of Indo-European speech is brought about through the running dry of the blood of the creative, the Nordic race.'[67]

Other leading German racial anthropologists were more cautious than Günther in ascribing all historical and cultural greatness in Europe and the Near East exclusively to the Nordic race, even though they still tended to regard the Nordic race as the most exceptional racial type. The German anthropologist and anatomist Eugen Fischer (1874–1967), director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics (from 1927 to 1942), argued that the European peoples could be divided into four basic races, the Nordic, Mediterranean, Alpine and Dinaric.[68] Like Günther, Fischer identified the Nordic race as the bearer of the Indo-European languages, and also argued that the survival of the Nordic race in other parts of Europe and Asia depended upon its geographical closeness to its homeland in northern Europe. Fischer also asserted, however, that the racial crossing of the Nordic type with 'closely related races' was able to produce the most gifted individuals and had created the greatest civilisations (e.g. ancient Greece).[69] Fischer maintained that the Nordic race was the leading racial component in the German people, but that the survival of German culture depended upon the 'racial combination' of the Nordic with the Alpine and Dinaric races, two races which were well represented among the Germans and were, to an extent, the equals of the leading Nordic race.[70]

Although Günther himself held a clear Nordicist position, which was opposed in principle to racial mixing, he also had a very favourable opinion of the Dinaric race, and his high regard for the Dinarics was to be frequently cited by South Slavic racial anthropologists and theorists. According to Günther, the Dinaric race probably shared a common origin with the Near Eastern or Hither Asiatic race in the Caucasus region; this could be discerned from the apparent physical similarities between the two races (such as brachycephaly, dark hair and a narrow face).[71] Günther argued that a part of this common Caucasian group left its homeland and through 'a change in the process of selection under different conditions

[67] Ibid., 198.
[68] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 118.
[69] Ibid., 146.
[70] Ibid., 148.
[71] Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*, 67–70, 111.

must have formed two groups out of the original single group.'[72] Despite their similarities, the physical and (especially) mental characteristics of these two races were said to differ considerably; for example, while 'the expression of the Dinaric face may be called bold, that of the Hither Asiatic is cunning.'[73]

The Dinaric race was strongly represented among the southern Germans of Bavaria and Austria, but its greatest concentration, Günther noted, was found in 'the regions of the Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, and Albanians.'[74] Günther also argued that a 'fairly strong Nordic strain' existed among the Albanians, Serbs and Slovenes.[75] Günther had defined the original or proto-Slavs as Nordic, noting that 'the graves of the Old Slavs from the times of the wandering of the peoples show a ruling class which is still almost purely Nordic.'[76] Similarly to Nordic psychological traits, Dinaric mental characteristics included such virtues as bravery in war, a warm feeling for nature, a strong love of home and a gift for music.[77] On the other hand, the Dinaric man lived 'more in the present' than the far-sighted Nordic. Furthermore, though bold, the Dinaric man did not seem to possess the 'urge to conquest', which marked the Nordic racial spirit.[78]

Günther was of the opinion that the Dinaric race was 'second among the races of Europe' in terms of 'mental capacity.'[79] Many of the greatest figures of European culture, particularly in the field of music, had shown 'a more or less strong Dinaric strain', including the 'Nordic-Dinaric' composers Haydn, Mozart, Liszt, Wagner, Chopin, Bruckner and Verdi.[80] Günther thus placed the tall, courageous Dinaric race above the other European races (except for the Nordic and Phalian) in terms of its physical and spiritual characteristics. The 'passionate and excitable' Mediterranean race, for example, had only 'a slight sense of order and law', and the Mediterranean man wanted above all to enjoy life.[81] As Christopher Hutton notes, Günther's racial taxonomy sought to contrast 'the restraint

[72] Ibid., 111.
[73] Ibid., 70.
[74] Ibid., 89, 92.
[75] Ibid., 92.
[76] Ibid., 225.
[77] Ibid., 58–59.
[78] Ibid., 58.
[79] Ibid., 59.
[80] Ibid., 1fn, 59.
[81] Ibid., 56–57.

and moral purity of the Nordic type . . . with the passionate, feminized Mediterranean.'[82]

Boris Zarnik: Nordic-Dinaric Racial Admixture

In his article, 'Race and Spiritual Productivity' from 1931, published in the scientific journal *Priroda* ('Nature'), Zarnik outlined his theory on the connection between race, mental characteristics and cultural attributes. Like Eugen Fischer, Zarnik argued that there were four basic European races concentrated in four main regions: the Nordic race in northern Europe, the Alpine race in central Europe, the Dinaric race in Yugoslavia, and the Mediterranean race found along the shores of the Mediterranean, excluding the eastern Adriatic coast.[83] These races were, however, found all over Europe, so that all European peoples were a mixture of these races, with the difference that the four races were found among these peoples in varying proportions.[84] In addition, there was a gradual mixture occurring between the four European races and the 'Mongolian race' as one moved from central Europe toward the East.[85]

As Zarnik explained, races were not only distinguished by external physical characteristics, but also by differences in regard to internal organs such as the brain; as spiritual or mental characteristics were linked to the brain, and also inherited in the same manner as physical ones, it was clear that there were mental as well as physical differences between the races.[86] Racially based mental differences were most obvious through a comparison of the European races with the 'black race': Zarnik used figures obtained from intelligence tests of army recruits in the United States (conducted by the psychologist R. M. Yerkes) to argue that Blacks were intellectually inferior, since they scored considerably lower in these IQ tests than White recruits. Zarnik also added that the worst test results for recruits born in Europe were found among Italians. In this particular case, Zarnik noted that one should take into account the fact that 'not exactly the best elements of the Italian population' had settled in the United States, but one also had to consider, to some extent, the 'racial

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[82] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 55.

[83] Boris Zarnik, 'Rasa i duševna produktivnost', *Priroda: Popularni ilustrovani časpois Hrv. Prirodoslovnog društva u Zagrebu*, XXI, No. 5–6 (1931): 129.

[84] Ibid., 129–130.

[85] Ibid., 130.

[86] Ibid., 130–131.

constitution' of the Italians.[87] According to Zarnik, one could also establish more extensive racial differences in mental capacity if other racial groups were analysed and compared: he thus noted the 'passivity of the Chinese, the deficient originality and great ability of imitation among the Japanese, the complete mental dullness of the Australian [Aborigines]', all of which could be attributed to 'the effects of their race.'[88]

Having outlined the mental racial differences between European and non-European races, Zarnik turned his attention to the question of racial differences among the Europeans themselves. He pointed to the prevailing theory that most Europeans, 90% in fact, could count members of all four European races among their ancestors.[89] Furthermore, there was no direct correlation between genotype and phenotype, so that it was possible for someone to simultaneously possess external Dinaric features and a Nordic brain; on the other hand, Zarnik noted, it was more likely that an individual who possessed all the physical characteristics of a particular race would also possess the 'psychic' characteristics of that race.[90] Zarnik remarked that, for the time being, one could only make general conclusions about the mental characteristics of the four main European races.

Although he stated that this incomplete mapping of the psychological characteristics of the four races could lead to 'subjective' classifications among anthropologists and biologists, Zarnik emphasised the fact that the perceived mental characteristics of the Dinaric race were 'very favourably evaluated' by racial anthropologists. Citing Eugen Fischer and Hans Günther, Zarnik noted the characteristics that the Dinaric race was supposed to share with the Nordic race: a developed sense of fantasy, great talent for art (especially music), a considerable degree of intelligence, great sense of self-confidence, courage, and a sense of heroism; on the other hand, the Dinaric type lacked the gift for organisation and had a carefree attitude toward life.[91]

Zarnik addressed the important racial-theoretical question as to whether the Nordic race was the only truly creative race (as had been argued by Günther). To begin with, Zarnik accepted the theory that the Nordic race was 'the creator of the Aryan or Indo-Germanic languages.' The fact that contemporary peoples of other races, such as the Persians, Armenians

87 Ibid., 131.
88 Ibid., 132.
89 Ibid., 133.
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.

and Indians spoke Indo-European languages could be explained by the hypothesis that 'people of Nordic race, as warriors, subjugated peoples of foreign races, and then as a ruling layer slowly imposed their language upon them.'[92] In the specific case of the European continent, Zarnik argued that 'Nordic tribes, especially the old Germanics and Slavs, conquered the whole of central and southern Europe.'[93] Zarnik relied on the research findings of the Austrian anatomist Carl Toldt to argue that the proto-Slavs had been predominantly of Nordic race: the graves of the old Slavs had revealed dolichocephalic skulls 'that could not be distinguished at all from old Germanic skulls.' Zarnik added that the skulls from the graves of Bosnian Bogomils were also dolichocephalic and it was significant that the Bogomils had 'belonged to the highest ruling layer.'[94]

Despite its undeniably exceptional gifts, the Nordic race could not, argued Zarnik, claim a monopoly on cultural creativity. While the Indian, Iranian, Greek and Roman cultures of antiquity might well be described as the 'spiritual products of the Nordic race', one could not deny the fact that other high cultures had existed, such as the 'Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian and other Eastern cultures', in which the Nordic race had not played a part at all.[95] Zarnik also noted that the Jews, who perhaps possessed 'hardly a 10% Nordic admixture', were also 'extraordinarily agile in the intellectual field' and had made great contributions to human progress.[96]

Zarnik argued that racial mixing was actually beneficial, especially in the case of the mixing of the Nordic race with other races, for it 'creates the conditions for great mental productivity.'[97] If one observed the 'physiognomy' of great intellectual figures in history one would find that the majority were 'mixed types', including Socrates, Leibniz, Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Voltaire, Dante, Caesar, Napoleon, Michelangelo and others. With some 'small exceptions', these intellectual geniuses bore various Nordic traits, but also the traits of other races, 'especially the Dinaric' (e.g. Goethe, Schiller and Voltaire), which led Zarnik to conclude that 'the Nordic-Dinaric mixture produces the most excellent qualities.'[98]

To substantiate his argument, Zarnik noted that, according to the German academic Kurt Gerlach (1889–1976), the great majority of birthplaces

92 Ibid., 134.
93 Ibid., 135.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid., 134–135.
96 Ibid., 135.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.

of the most distinguished Germans could be found in the areas of the greatest mixing between the Nordic, Dinaric and Alpine races.[99] On the other hand, the areas in Germany with a relatively pure Nordic population, namely in northern Germany, had produced few great cultural figures.[100] Zarnik also cited the work of the German psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer (1888–1964) who argued that racial mixing (particularly between the Nordic and Alpine races) had led to great cultural creativity in ancient Greece and India and modern Europe.[101] Zarnik maintained that racial mixing (especially in the case of the Nordic, Dinaric and Alpine races) often led to the 'continous tension between individual mental qualities', which created the dynamic or 'demonic' nature so common to men of genius.[102] Zarnik cautiously argued, however, that not all race mixing produced great geniuses; what was necessary was for 'selected types of two races to come into contact with each other', in other words, two individuals who possessed exceptional qualities of either race.[103] Accordingly, the uncontrolled racial mixing that occurred in large cities only led to 'sterility' and not the production of 'ingenious people.'[104]

Despite his insistence that the Nordic race was not exclusively responsible for all great high cultures, Zarnik still regarded the Nordic race as possessing particularly exceptional mental gifts, for one 'cannot ignore the fact that the Nordic race is a component part of the population in almost every [area] where new cultures and great cultural accomplishments appeared.'[105] The examples of India, Iran, Greece and Rome highlighted how great cultures developed, and 'the first consequence of the Nordic penetration' is the appearance of an Aryan language. Zarnik remarked, however, that after two to three centuries of great cultural achievements, there follows a period of intellectual sterility, which can only be overcome by a fresh wave of Nordic settlers. The best example of this was Italian history: the old Roman culture eventually disappeared, but early medieval Italy was invaded by 'half-barbarian Nordic Germanic tribes.' These tribes were 'mentally sterile', but after interbreeding with the 'equally sterile Roman population', the conditions were set for the appearance of the

99 Ibid., 136. Also see Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 151.
100 Zarnik, 'Rasa i duševna produktivnost', 137.
101 Ibid., 138, and Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 127.
102 Zarnik, Rasa i duševna produktivnost', 138.
103 Ibid., 139.
104 Ibid.
105 Ibid.

Italian Renaissance, which made Italy the centre of the Western world.[106] For Zarnik, Nordic-Germanic barbarian virility had thus refreshed the old Roman blood.

Zarnik stressed that 'the Nordic race has particular elements which, through mixing with other races, incite the development of particular intellectual qualities.'[107] However, only certain races, namely the Dinaric and Alpine races, were able to contribute to the development of intellectual capabilities through interbreeding with the Nordic race. Accordingly, racial mixing between, for example, the Nordic Dutch and Hottentots in South Africa, or between the Nordic English and Blacks in North America, produced persons of 'very weak mental capabilities.'[108] In the case of Yugoslavia Zarnik felt confident enough to state that the South Slav nation contained both 'Nordic and Dinaric elements, thus races that produce very good combinations, so that we can in this respect look toward the future without concern.'[109]

Conclusion

In the interwar period the ideology of integral or unitarist Yugoslavism had unsuccessfully attempted to create a united South Slav nation upon the basis of linguistic theory and racial anthropology. The basic reason for this failure was the inability of Yugoslavist and Greater Serbian intellectuals to recognise that 'the separate South Slavic peoples were long formed and could not now be integrated.'[110] Although linguistic theory could postulate a common 'Serbo-Croat' linguistic identity for the South Slavs (or at least their vital *štokavian* speaking core), it was obvious that this was not enough to create a new nation, for Croats and Serbs were divided by distinct cultural and political traditions. The late English historian Adrian Hastings argued convincingly that, during the late medieval and early modern periods, there had occurred a 'gelling of national identities . . . in regard to Serbs and Croats . . . a gelling produced by a mix of religion, literature and political history which . . . is hard indeed to alter.'[111]

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106 Ibid.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid., 140.
110 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 225.
111 Hastings, *Construction of Nationhood*, 145.

Integral Yugoslavism could not 'restore' a non-existent Slavic racial homogeneity between Croats and Serbs.

The construction of modern Croatian and Serbian national identities in the nineteenth century was rooted, as in the case of most European nationalist ideologies, in the biblical model or paradigm of human identity, which 'was founded on the notion of a lineage traced forwards through time from an original male ancestor', and 'lineages were distinguished by language and territory.'[112] The ideology of Yugoslavism lacked the powerful historical foundation that the biblical paradigm could provide to modern nationalism. The discipline of racial anthropology could not provide the central intellectual foundation for modern nationalist movements because racial anthropology had a very problematic relationship to the ideology of nationalism. Nineteenth-century nationalism had wanted to unite the *Volk* or *narod* but racial anthropologists had the task of confronting nationalists with the uncomfortable theory that nations were not uniform entities but in reality heterogeneous groups, since they consisted of several different races.

On the other hand, racial anthropology could provide a negative sense of identity because it was able to define and exclude foreign racial elements that did not 'truly' belong to the *Volk* or people. The clearest example of this was the attitude of German *völkisch* nationalism (especially National Socialism) toward the status of German Jews. A traditional linguistic based nationalism would have to accept German Jews as members of the German *Volk* and Aryan family of peoples for they too spoke the Aryan German 'mother tongue.' Racial anthropologists, however, provided the argument that Jews (as well as Gypsies and Africans) belonged to racially foreign non-European elements: both the Sephardic and East European Jews were thus defined by German racial anthropologists as belonging predominantly to the Oriental and Near Eastern races, with further strong admixtures of Hamitic, Mongolian and Negro racial elements.[113]

In the case of Yugoslavist nationalism, racial anthropologists could not provide a common 'Nordic-Dinaric' identity that could unite all South Slavs into one nation, because that racial theory was not linked to an older linguistic and territorial identity, as in the example of German nationalism. The Yugoslavs were not a historical *Volk* or *narod*. In any case, the theory of a Dinaric identity and origin exposed an internal intellectual

[112] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 80.
[113] Ibid., 24, 34, 48.

contradicton within unitarist Yugoslavism of the interwar period. The ideology of Yugoslavism had been a nineteenth-century Croatian pan-Slavist intellectual construct that not only aimed to culturally unite the South Slavs, but also sought to further the cultural links between all Slavs. According to Gaj, Strossmayer and the Radić brothers, the Slavs were a uniform ethnolinguistic-racial entity. The theory of Dinaric racial origins, however, suggested a non-Slav (i.e. Near Eastern and/or Balkan-Illyrian) origin for the greater part of the South Slavs.

Integral Yugoslavism was also torn between arguing for the unity of all Yugoslavs on the one hand, and stressing the importance of the leading or core Serbian-Dinaric component on the other. In that sense, the theory of a superior Nordic-Dinaric racial core could not apply to all Yugoslavs but only to the leading Serbian ethnic core that led the Yugoslav state. This style of racial elitism, however, did not fit well with the idea of the inherent 'democratic' tendencies that were supposed to form the basis of the Serbian racial psyche. Cvijić, and other Serbian racial anthropologists and theorists, believed that the inherent dominant properties of the Dinaric Serbian racial type could biologically assimilate other racial-psychological types among the South Slavs. Serbian racial anthropology went hand in hand with the expansionist and assimilationist political program for a 'Greater Serbia', or a Serbian dominated Yugoslavia, in which Croats, other South Slavs and even ethnic Albanians, Romanians and Roma, would eventually be expected or forced to accept a Serbian national consciousness.[114] Serbian racial anthropology was therefore not too concerned with the prospect of extensive racial mixing: in 1935 the Serbian physician Svetislav Stefanović had even claimed that racial mixing between Slavs and Mongols actually produced a 'satisfactory' racial quality.[115] Serbian race theory thus argued in favour of Serbian-Dinaric racial superiority and expansionism, but on a 'democratic' basis (i.e. anyone could theoretically become a Serb national through intermarriage with the superior Dinaric Serbs).

In contrast to this racial theory, interwar anti-Yugoslavist Croatian race theory articulated a much more elitist and exclusive racial identity, in

[114] During the 1890s, for example, the Serbian government began to systematically Serbianise non-Orthodox Roma on its territory through conversion to Orthodoxy. The so-called 'White Gypsies' of Serbian Orthodox faith had already been long assimilated. David Crowe, *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 200–209. Also see Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 116–117, 200.

[115] Malović, 'Eugenika kao ideološki sastojak fašizma u Srbiji', 94.

other words, one that did not seek to assimilate other South Slav and Balkan peoples. Anti-Yugoslavist racial thought did, however, incorporate the model of the patriarchal and tribal Dinaric culture and the theory of a Nordic-Dinaric racial core. But in opposition to the *hajduk* rebel of Serbian-Yugoslavist racial theory (or the pacifist Slav farmer of Croatian Peasant ideology), Croat anti-Yugoslavists and, later, the Ustashe promoted the prototype of the heroic and noble, Aryan-Croatian warrior or knight (*vitez*), who could trace his ethnolinguistic origins to a Slav-Gothic-Iranian ruling caste.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERWAR CROATIAN ETHNOLINGUISTIC-RACIAL THEORIES

Introduction

In 1935 the left-wing Yugoslavist Croatian writer Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981) criticised anti-Yugoslavist nationalist intellectuals for apparently attempting to reduce the Croatian national question to

> . . . some sort of racial, blue-blooded, noble isolation from the plebeian, primitive, Balkan schismatic reality. This is the inertia of the Austrian Eastern Marches, the Military Frontier, Viennese waltzes, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Western European prejudices, which . . . isolate the Western South Slavic lands from the "Balkan gypsies."[1]

For Krleža, therefore, anti-Yugoslavist race theories were nothing more than a Croat nationalist adoption of typically Austrian-German and, more generally, Western anti-Balkan prejudices. In reality, the roots of these racial ideas were far more complex, and, as this chapter shows, anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals also had a much more complex attitude toward the Balkans as a peculiar racial-cultural-geographic space. To be sure, interwar anti-Yugoslavist race theories were indeed based on a general concept of Croatian 'racial, blue-blooded, noble isolation', but one that did not exclude Croatia's *partial* affiliation to the 'East.' Furthermore, the idea of 'isolation' in this case entailed the use of racial anthropology in order to erect ethnic-racial differences between Croats and Serbs.

During the interwar period, the Croat geographer and geopolitical theorist Filip Lukas emerged as the leading anti-Yugoslavist nationalist intellectual. A conservative nationalist from Dalmatia, Lukas articulated a coherent and detailed theory of Croat national individuality that was based, to a large extent, on race theory. In his youth Lukas had politically adhered to a moderate form of Yugoslavism (common among Dalmatian Croat intellectuals), which accepted the Yugoslav idea as a wider form of ethnolinguistic identity for Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. From 1928 to

[1] Cited in Ivo Goldstein, 'Granica na Drini—Značenje i razvoj mitologema' in Husnija Kamberović ed. *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu* (Sarajevo: Institut za historiju, 2003), 117.

1945 he served as president of Croatia's oldest cultural institution, *Matica Hrvatska* ('The Croatian Matrix').

Filip Lukas: The Western-Eastern Croats and the Dinaric Race

Lukas was the first Croat to offer an intellectual critique of Jovan Cvijić's influential theory of Serbian-Dinaric racial exceptionality, which he presented in an essay from 1925 entitled 'The Geographical Foundation of the Croatian People.' In this essay, Lukas argued that nations were not synonymous with races, since a nation was a 'psychic-cultural collectivity', while race was a 'natural-scientific concept.'[2] A race was thus an aggregate of individuals who were grouped together exclusively upon the basis of common physical characteristics. In this early article, Lukas adopted a cautious approach to race theory, noting that racial characteristics probably did influence the formation of nations (though such an argument could be neither refuted nor scientifically proven).[3] He cited the American racial theorist William Z. Ripley (1867–1941)—who had divided Europeans into the three main races of the Teutonic, Mediterranean and Alpine—to argue that race could be considered 'the raw material out of which the layers of life are created', just as 'the characteristics of a fibre determine the cloth it was woven into.' Races thus showed 'certain dispositions that were transmitted through inheritance.'[4]

In line with the findings of racial anthropology, Lukas stressed that all European nations, especially great nations such as the British, French and Italians, were the product of racial mixing.[5] As regards the South Slavs, Lukas argued, like Cvijić, that the Dinaric race was the most widespread type found among Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. He noted that anthropological science had so far hypothesised that the Dinaric race originally formed a single group with the 'Near Eastern Armenoid race', and which, through isolation and natural selection, had developed into a separate race.[6] Although it could not be established as to when exactly the Dinaric race had arrived in Europe, the oldest traces stretched to the late Stone Age, around 2000 BC; people of Dinaric race had even reached as far as

[2] 'Geografijska osnovica hrvatskoga naroda' (1925), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor ed. Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997, 108.
[3] Ibid., 108–109.
[4] Ibid., 109.
[5] Ibid., 108–109.
[6] Ibid., 109.

England. The Dinarics seem to have been particularly widespread during the Bronze Age.[7] Lukas remarked that anthropologists were uncertain as to whether the South Slavs had possessed Dinaric physical traits before their arrival to the Balkans, or whether they acquired those traits there through admixture with a local race; Lukas noted there was a scholarly inclination to accept the latter hypothesis.[8]

Lukas was keen to disprove one of the central tenets of Cvijić's Dinaric theory, namely, that it was the Serbs who made up the bulk of the South Slavic Dinaric population. Lukas observed that Cvijić's 1918 publication ('The Balkan Peninsula') was largely 'anthropogeographic' in its approach, and while there was no doubt that his book represented an 'expert and thorough work', Cvijić was not an anthropologist and the areas in the book that dealt with anthropology contained many imprecise or unfounded claims.[9] Lukas argued that contemporary anthropological research had established that 'the Dinaric race is represented in purer form in regions populated predominantly by Croats.' In contrast, the entire Serbia proper (including Šumadija) east of the Kolubara River was populated by a Serbian population that was racially closer to the non-Dinaric Bulgarians. The 'core' of the Dinaric race was thus found along the Adriatic coast.[10]

To substantiate his arguments in regard to the Dinaric racial identity of the Croats, Lukas relied on the work of the Swiss anthropologist Eugène Pittard (1867–1962).[11] Pittard was fairly certain that Croats and Serbs were racially distinct from each other, even if both nations may have been one people 'north of the Carpathians', prior to their settlement in the Balkans.[12] According to Pittard, the Croats belonged predominantly to the tall, brunet and broad-headed Dinaric race, which was very different to the predominant racial type of the northern Slavs.[13] This led Pittard to claim that, in all probability, the Croats, along with the Bosnians and Slovenes, were a 'Slavonized folk' and therefore anthropologically separate from the Russians and Poles in the north.[14] As far as the racial relationship between Croats and Serbs was concerned, Pittard found that, according to the preliminary

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 109–110.
9 Ibid., 33fn, 111.
10 Ibid., 33fn, 113.
11 Ibid.
12 Eugène Pittard, *Race and History: An Ethnological Introduction to History*. Trans. V. C. C. Collum (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1926), 258, 287.
13 Ibid., 258–261.
14 Ibid., 258, 260.

anthropological research that had been conducted so far on both groups, the Serbs were predominantly tall, but also more dolichocephalic in head form (along with a large number of intermediate skull types) than the predominantly brachycephalic Croats; accordingly, Pittard reasoned that there was probably a closer racial relationship between the Serbs and the largely dolichocephalic Bulgars, so that 'a portion of the Serbs and of the Bulgars could be classed together as a special ethnic group.'[15]

Although the Serbs were, therefore, quite distinct from their Slavic-speaking 'brethren' in Russia and Poland, they also clearly did not belong to the same race as the Croats.[16] Furthermore, the Serbs were clearly separated from the Bosnian Muslims, whom Pittard referred to as 'Islamized Dinarics.'[17] Indeed, the Bosnians and Herzegovinians were among the tallest people in Europe and 'constitute one of the most representative elements of the handsome Dinaric (or Adriatic) race.'[18] Pittard also remarked that the Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia (and the Montenegrins) were distinct from the Serbians of Serbia, for the former were 'much more brachycephalic.'[19] The Swiss anthropologist concluded that 'in these Yugo-Slavs we have a very good example of the anthropological mistakes to which a linguistic label may lead.'[20] Pittard was critical of nationalist ideologists and academics that confused language with race. He noted that it was unfortunate that 'even to-day we hear of "the Latin", "the Germanic" or "the Slavonic" races in current speech, in any number of textbooks and in journalistic parlance', despite the fact that no such categories existed in an anthropological sense.[21]

Turning again to Lukas' essay from 1925, one finds that he was also critical of Cvijić's claim that large scale migrations in the South Slav lands after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 involved, in the great majority of cases, the migration of Dinaric Serbs. Lukas argued that not all of these migrations consisted of South Slavs, for these migratory groups also included many 'Greeks, Albanians, Tzintzars, Vlachs, Gypsies, etc.' and even today one could detect many 'non-Dinarid' racial types among the Slavicised descendants of these various peoples.[22] As he was still committed to some

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15 Ibid., 285–286.
16 Ibid., 287.
17 Ibid., 284.
18 Ibid., 288.
19 Ibid., 286, 288.
20 Ibid., 260.
21 Ibid., 46.
22 Lukas, 'Geografijska osnovica hrvatskoga naroda', 33fn, 114–115.

form of Yugoslavism in the mid 1920s, Lukas also stated that the Dinaric area was the 'biological source of the Croats and Serbs, and to some extent of the Slovenes.'[23] The Croats, Serbs and Slovenes represented three separate cultural-historical entities within the wider Yugoslav ethnolinguistic group.[24]

During the course of the 1930s, however, Lukas completely abandoned the Yugoslav idea and came to articulate a purely Croatian idea of national individuality. In a speech given on the occasion of the yearly assembly of *Matica Hrvatska* in 1930, under the title, 'On the Spirit of Croatian Culture', Lukas argued that the Croats were, by their origin, an 'Eastern people', who were geopolitically rooted in the Balkans and linked racially and linguistically to the Slavic East.[25] The Eastern characteristics of the Croats had been successfully adapted to Western civilisation, from which the Croats had received their Catholic faith, notions of law and state, art, literature and philosophy. This Western-Eastern dualism represented the 'spirit' of Croatian culture.[26] The Croats had further preserved their autochthonous patriarchal culture, which was also expressed in the beautiful epic folk songs of the 'Islamicised Croats' (i.e. the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims). The Croats thus represented a 'bridge' between the West and East.[27] In his 1932 article, 'The Lines of Direction and Elements in the Development of the Croatian People', Lukas referred to the Croats as a 'Western-Eastern [nation] in its full complexity, but [which] in its psychic depth and racial structure has more Eastern characteristics.'[28] Lukas defined the West as the product of the Germanic and Romanic cultures, while the East was represented by the Slavic peoples (which did not, however, represent a uniform cultural entity).[29] According to Lukas, the strong autochthonous character and spirit of Croatian culture had ensured that the Croats had not completely 'lost' themselves and their originality within Western civilisation, as had happened to the Slovenes;

[23] Ibid., 126.
[24] Ibid., 124–125.
[25] 'O duhu hrvatske kulture' (1930), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), 125, 129.
[26] Ibid., 124–129.
[27] Ibid., 125–127.
[28] 'Smjernice i elementi u razvoju hrvatskoga naroda' (1932), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), 96.
[29] Ibid., 93–94.

at the same time, in having accepted Western civilisation as a framework, the Croats had secured their place as a 'cultured nation.'[30]

In an essay written in 1936 on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of Ante Starčević's death, Filip Lukas took the opportunity to highlight the 'racial contrasts' between Starčević and his chief political opponent, Josip Juraj Strossmayer, which apparently helped to explain their political rivalry.[31] Starčević was, according to Lukas, 'a distinct racial type, born to peasants amongst the mountains of Lika.'[32] Although a highly educated man, Starčević politically rejected everything that was not part of his Croatian racial and cultural heritage, including the Illyrian and Yugoslav ideologies. In contrast, Strossmayer (who was of non-Croat origin) 'could not experience the past of the Croatian people', because he had not 'inherited' that past, which was foreign to his blood and heritage.[33] Strossmayer was connected to Croatian culture through what Lukas termed a 'horizontal tie', that is, as the descendant of an immigrant from the West (a German-Austrian) he shared common Western civilisational traits with the Croats, but did not share the 'vertical' link of common blood and spiritual ties. Strossmayer was therefore motivated by universal and internationalist ideals (Christianity, Yugoslavism, pan-Slavism) and not by the inherited knowledge possessed by Starčević, namely, that the Croats were a distinct 'civilisational and historical-psychic type.'[34] Unlike Starčević, who was born in a mountainous area, which, like a 'fortress', preserves the oldest racial types, Strossmayer was born in the wide, fertile plains of Slavonia, which 'opens far reaching gazes and, like the sea, stimulates an expansion of the spirit.'[35]

Lukas was critical of those Croat intellectuals, particularly in the Croatian Peasant Party, who claimed that only the 'autochthonous' (i.e. peasant) Croatian culture was worth preserving.[36] As Lukas explained in his 1936 speech, 'For Croatian Cultural Wholeness', all national cultures were full of cultural elements that had originated from somewhere else; these originally foreign cultural elements were no less national in character,

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[30] Ibid., 101.

[31] 'Starčević' (1936), in Filip Lukas, *Ličnosti—stvaranja—pokreti* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), 22.

[32] Ibid., 19.

[33] Ibid., 22, 26.

[34] Ibid., 22–23.

[35] Ibid., 19, 23.

[36] 'Za hrvatsku kulturnu cjelovitost' (1936), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), 195.

since they had been assimilated through a symbiosis with the national 'spirit.'[37] It was the national spirit or soul that was truly unique to every nation. National 'spirit' or consciousness was one of the 'pillars' of European civilisation, along with the heritage of Antiquity, Christianity and the natural sciences.[38] The Croatian spirit was characterised by 'idealism' and 'ethics'; Lukas asserted that idealism separated the Croats from their Mediterranean neighbours, while ethics separated them from the other Slavic peoples (for example, Serbs and Slovenes were both marked by 'realist-materialist' traits).[39]

Although Lukas admitted that some biological and psychological traits were common to the Slavic peoples, the Croats, with their own peculiar racial traits and racial mixture, were an individual ethnic group. The Croats had passed through a particular 'historical-cultural development', which separated them from every other nation, and that peculiarly developed 'cultural type' could not be replaced or removed by the abstract notion of Yugoslavism.[40] Furthermore, the heterogeneous nature of Croatian culture, namely, the socio-economic and climatic differences between the Mediterranean, central European and Balkan Croatian regions, resulted in the emergence of distinct Croatian 'geo-psychic' types—the three most important being the Mediterranean, the Pannonian-Alpine and the Patriarchal (Dinaric) type. The Dinaric area included the Dalmatian hinterland and Lika, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lukas argued that 'this patriarchal [Dinaric] part of our nation, a-musical, hard, frugal, serious, persevering and warlike, represents the purest type of our people.'[41]

In one of his most important essays, entitled 'The Problem of Croatian Culture' (1938), Lukas explained that, during the course of their migration to the western Balkans from their original Slavic homeland (located somewhere between the Vistula and Dnepr Rivers), the proto-Croats had already interbred with Caucasian, Tartar-Mongol and Germanic tribes, such as the Antes, Avars and Goths.[42] The Croats received their greatest 'blood admixture', however, in their new Adriatic homeland, where they subsequently intermarried with 'the large number of Romanised Illyro-Celts, Romans, remnants of the Avars and Germanic tribes, and some

[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid., 191.
[39] Ibid., 195–196.
[40] Ibid., 194–195.
[41] Ibid., 198.
[42] 'Problem hrvatske kulture' (1938), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor, ed. (Zagreb: Dom & svijet, 1997), 250–251.

other ethnic splinters.'[43] Lukas argued that the dominant Dinaric racial type among the Croats emerged from a 'crystallisation' of this ethnic-racial admixture. The Dinaric race was today found predominantly in the Balkan area where the first independent Croatian state was established and which was inhabited by the strongest Croatian clans and families. This area had produced the greatest historical figures in Croatian history, from the tenth-century Croatian king Tomislav to Ante Starčević.[44]

Alongside the Dinaric racial type, other racial types existed among the Croats, though usually not in their original purity, but rather, mixed with other types: in the lowlands of northern Croatia one could find many representatives of the Alpine and, to a lesser extent, East Baltic races, while the Adriatic littoral contained some members of the Mediterranean race; Croatia had also been settled by members of the Nordic race, 'who, merging with the old [Dinaric] inhabitants, gave our culture many beautiful contributions.'[45] Lukas already noted in his 1936 speech, 'For Croatian Cultural Wholeness', that Dalmatia had been settled (before Roman rule) by the ancient Greeks, who left 'visible traits' in the population that have 'remained indelible to the present.' Lukas described the ancient Greek settlers in Dalmatia as 'great Nordic creators' of culture.[46]

As a result of their historical ethnic-racial admixture, 'the Croats, regardless of how much they belong to the Slavic group by their language, have come to be racially closer to some neighbouring tribes than to the Slavic Russians.'[47] Language, Lukas explained in his 1938 essay, was not a 'racial and blood characteristic'; for example, the Bulgars spoke a Slavic language but were of 'Mongol race', while almost all central European Jews spoke German but remained racially distinct from the German (and other) people(s) in the region.[48] Although Lukas thought it unlikely that all the racial characteristics of the original 'Aryan ruling layer' of Russia had disappeared—apart from the Aryan Slavic language—as some scholars had argued, it was also clear that the Russians had assimilated much 'non-Aryan blood', particularly through admixture with Finno-Ugric and Mongol tribes.[49]

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[43] Ibid., 251.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Lukas, 'Za hrvatsku kulturnu cjelovitost', 187.
[47] Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture', 252.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 251–252.

Although the Serbs spoke more or less the same language as the Croats, they had, argued Lukas, assimilated, and intermarried with, other ethnic groups, which had given them a different 'biological type.'[50] During the Middle Ages, the Serbs had interbred with Romanised Thracians, Vlachs, Dacians and Illyrians, while during the long period of Ottoman Turkish rule, the Serbs had also been subject to a great deal of racial mixing with various Near Eastern immigrants from Asia Minor.[51] Lukas stressed that no nation belonged to one and the same race, but one 'does not have to be a proponent of an exaggerated racism' to accept that 'every nation must have a blood core as a dominant and hereditary biological mass.' In the case of the Croatian people, the dominant racial type was the Dinaric race, since the mountainous Dinaric region was better protected from the infiltration of foreign blood than the fertile land of northern Croatia, which did not have natural barriers such as mountains protecting it from foreign immigration.[52]

In his essay, 'Why Dubrovnik was great' (1938), Lukas argued that three factors made a nation unique in relation to all others. Firstly, the nation was a 'blood community' or an 'ethnobiological type'; although all nations were the product of a great deal of blood admixture, there also existed a dominant racial type that formed the core component of every nation.[53] The second significant factor was 'cultural kinship' among the members of a people, and that shared culture was the product of the same national spirit. Though Lukas noted that language was generally considered the first mark of a particular culture, a language could be shared by more than one nation if those nations were differentiated by other characteristics, such as religion, state organisation and culture. The third factor for determining national affiliation was a 'common life', a 'common experience' and common 'memories of the past', through which a blood and cultural group becomes 'a community of fate.'[54]

Lukas' emphasis on the importance of race, as well as the dominant role of the Dinaric racial type in Croatian culture and history, was echoed in the works of other Croat intellectuals. In an article from 1929 the economist Ivan Krajač (1877–1945?) argued that 'the most beautiful and

[50] Ibid., 252.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid., 261.
[53] 'Zašto je Dubrovnik bio velik' (1938), in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor, ed. (Zagreb: Dom & svijet, 1997), 224.
[54] Ibid.

strongest, most persevering and most moral human type' amongst the Croats could be found in the mountainous parts of their country, especially in Herzegovina.[55] In an article from 1930 on 'Race, Tribe, People and Nation', the Croatian geographer Stjepan Ratković (1878–1968) noted that while the boundaries between races were not clearly delineated—which had led to divergent opinions on the precise number of the world's races—the question of how many races existed was 'irrelevant.' The fact remained that 'there are objective characteristics of race', which were 'visibly expressed in physical attributes.'[56] Races were also marked by distinct spiritual traits, though Ratković rejected as too 'extreme' the idea—first expounded by Gobineau—that history was soley determined by the 'racial structure' of nations. Ratković also argued, however, that inherited racial capabilities did indeed exert a strong influence on the 'cultural and political development of nations.'[57] The Dinaric race, which was preserved in its purest form in Herzegovina, Montenegro, western Bosnia, Dalmatia and Lika, formed a large part of 'the racial structure of the Croatian people.'[58] During the mid-1920s the Anthropological Section of the Sociological Society (*Sociološko društvo*) in Zagreb, which collected 'material on the biology of the South Slavs,' had conducted a racial survey of a group of Zagreb schoolchildren, mostly of Croatian parentage, examining the students' cephalic index, facial index and pigmentation of eyes and hair.[59] The survey was supervised by Boris Zarnik and Ivo Pilar. Upon the basis of the results, Zarnik made estimates of the racial characteristics of the total Croat population of Zagreb: approximately 50% belonged to the Dinaric race, 35% were of Alpine race, while 15% were Nordic.[60]

The articulation of a Croat Dinaric racial theory created a further distance between anti-Yugoslavist Croatian nationalism and the mainstream Croatian Peasant Party. The ideologists of the interwar Peasant Party, notably the Croatian sociologist Dinko Tomašić (1902–1975), wrote of the ethical and moral superiority of the democratic and collectivist culture of the Slavic *zadruga* (commune) found in the Pannonian lowlands of northern Croatia. In 1938 Tomašić claimed that the tribal and patriarchal culture of the Dinaric mountain areas was 'based on an egocentric and

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[55] Ivan Krajač, 'Narodne planine i Hrvati', *Hrvatski planinar*, XXV, No. 4 (1929): 85.

[56] Stjepan Ratković, 'Rasa, pleme, narod, nacija', *Hrvatski geografski glasnik*, 1, No. 2 (1930): 177.

[57] Ibid., 178–179.

[58] Ibid., 179.

[59] Zarnik, 'O rasnom sastavu evropskog pučanstva', 73–75.

[60] Ibid., 75.

competitive foundation', often without regard for the common good; in this culture individuals vied for power and social relations were based on hierarchic principles.[61] Tomašić argued that both the Pannonian 'communal culture' (*zadružna kultura*) and the Dinaric 'tribal culture' (*plemenska kultura*) were the two basic types of autochthonous Croatian cultures in contrast to Western civilisation, but he emphasised that the 'communal culture' was the preferred basis for the socio-economic reorganisation of a future peasant Croatia.[62]

Tomašić's cultural types were largely based on ethnographic and geographical, rather than racial-anthropological, factors. He was particularly critical of theories of Dinaric and/or Nordic racial exceptionality or superiority.[63] Tomašić claimed that the theory of a 'Nordic-Dinaric race' was intended 'to provide a theoretical justification to [Alfred] Rosenberg's plans for a "Nordic empire", the borders of which would include a huge space that stretches from the Scandinavian all the way to the Balkan lands.'[64] Tomašić's statement simplistically reduced race theory and anthropology, in the particular case of the theory of a Nordic-Dinaric racial type, to a question of National Socialist political-ideological aims; one could, for example, hardly claim that the anthropologist Joseph Deniker had political motives when, in the intellectual spirit of the times, he classified the tall, fair and brachycephalic Sub-Adriatic (or 'Nordic-Dinaric') secondary race in central Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. In any case, as a Peasant Party ideologist, Tomašić himself adhered to a sort of cultural-racial pan-Slavism.

Milan Šufflay: Croatia as a Frontier of the White West

Interwar Croatian anti-Yugoslavism found another leading intellectual representative in the person of the internationally renowned historian, Milan Šufflay (1879–1931). A member of Croatia's old gentry, Šufflay was the chief ideologist of the interwar Croatian Party of Right (of which Ante Pavelić was the secretary before he founded the Ustasha movement in 1930) and became a national martyr in 1931 after being murdered by a

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[61] Dinko Tomašić, *Politički razvitak Hrvata: Rasprave i eseji* (1938; reprint Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 1997), 113.

[62] Ibid., 112–114, 118–121.

[63] Ibid., 139–188.

[64] Ibid., 142. Alfred Rosenberg (1893–1946) was one of the leading National Socialist race theorists.

Yugoslav government agent because of his intellectual opposition to Yugoslavist unitarism and the Karadjordjević regime. His murder prompted an international outcry, led by Albert Einstein (1879–1955) and Heinrich Mann (1871–1950), who wrote a memorandum in protest at Yugoslav government terror to the Human Rights League in Paris.[65]

In 1924 Šufflay had come to the conclusion that 'the Western Catholic Croats have nothing to look for in the Orthodox Balkans. Today it is the domain of the Serbs, who are completely adapted to it through a long series of generations.'[66] Šufflay attributed an elevated mission to Croatian nationalism, arguing in an article from 1928 that, since Croatia was situated on the border between the West and East, or Europe and Asia, Croatian nationalism was different in nature to the nationalism of a 'non-Frontier' nation.[67] Šufflay declared that Croatian nationalism did not just mean 'local patriotism', but also 'loyal service to the whole white West.'[68] The Croats had long ago adopted the civilisation of Roman Illyria, and the Roman Empire, with its centre in the Mediterranean, had formed the main pocket or 'oasis' of the white race, quite distinct from the 'yellow oasis' in China and the 'brown oasis' in India.[69] Šufflay defended Croatian nationalism as something 'absolutely positive', because there were higher ethical motives to this nationalism, namely, the defence of Western civilisation.[70] His nationalism thus contained an 'internationalist' ideological element, for Croatian national identity was dependent on its link to a wider civilisation. Šufflay argued that on the border between

> . . . the West and East, Catholicism and Orthodoxy, European culture and barbarism, the Croatian name, Croatian blood, does not only signify the nation!

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[65] Šufflay was murdered in Zagreb in broad daylight by a brutal blow to the head from an iron rod. For a summary of Šufflay's political activity and ideas, see Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia,* 266–269 and Ivo Banac, 'Zarathustra in Red Croatia: Milan Šufflay and His Theory of Nationhood', in Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery eds. *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1995) 181–193.

[66] 'Radić, Bethlen i Mussolini' (1924), in Milan Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike: Dvanaest eseja* (1928; reprint, Zagreb: Novija hrvatska povjesnica, 1999), 29.

[67] 'Značajke Hrvatske nacije' (1928), in Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike*, 40–41.

[68] Ibid., 41.

[69] 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja' (1926), in Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike*, 30 and Šufflay, 'Značajke hrvatske nacije', 38.

[70] Šufflay, 'Značajke hrvatske nacije', 40–41.

> Here Croatian blood signifies civilisation. Croatdom is here a synonym for everything beautiful and good that was created by the European West.[71]

While adamant in his pro-Occidental conviction, Šufflay also pointed to the decisive influence of the 'Eastern' Slavic ethnolinguistic and cultural heritage, which the Croats had carried with them from north of the Carpathian Mountains to the shores of the Adriatic Sea. Thus, the sedentary nature of traditional Slavic life evolved into 'fidelity to the soil' of the new Adriatic homeland, while 'Slavic toilsomeness' became a quintessential Croatian 'feeling of loyalty', which found its fullest expression in the centuries-long Croatian struggle against the Ottoman Turks.[72] Šufflay noted, however, that the Slavic Croats had mixed extensively with Illyrian-Vlach blood in the southern parts of Croatia, and with Avar and Turanian (Hungarian) blood in north-west Croatia and Lika.[73] He accepted the theory of Slavic political and organisational inferiority expounded by Jan Peisker.[74] Accordingly, Šufflay argued that the 'Altaian or Turanian admixture . . . gave the Slavic patrimonial mass of Croats a peculiar obstinacy and noble rigidity.'[75] The Turanian and Avar influence in the medieval period was apparently visible in the strong cavalry of the Kingdom of Croatia and in the title of 'Ban' (Peisker had already made similar claims).[76] Even today, according to Šufflay, the 'hardest, most unbreakable' types among the Croats could be found in the areas with a strong Turanian strain such as Zagorje and Lika.[77]

Šufflay also accepted the theories proposed by the Slovenian historians K. Oštir and Niko Županič on the non-Indo-European origin of the Croat and Serb ethnic names. According to Oštir's theory, 'Croat' was derived from the name of the Carpathian Mountains, a name meaning 'stone' ('karp') and which was 'pre-Indo-European' or 'paleo-European' in origin.[78] Oštir and Županič had argued that the proto-Croats and proto-Serbs belonged to the pre-Aryan paleo-European or 'Alarodian' inhabitants of the Caucasus region; these peoples had formed the warrior elites

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[71] Šufflay, 'Radić, Bethlen i Mussolini', 28.
[72] Šufflay, 'Značajke Hrvatske nacije', 37–38.
[73] Ibid.
[74] 'Starohrvatska prosvjeta' (1928), in Darko Sagrak and Musa Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay: Izabrani eseji, rasprave i članci* (Zagreb: Darko Sagrak, 1999), 77–79.
[75] Šufflay, 'Značajke Hrvatske nacije', 37–38.
[76] Ibid. Also see Peisker, 'The Expansion of the Slavs', 440.
[77] Šufflay, 'Značajke Hrvatske nacije', 38.
[78] Šufflay, 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja', 31. Also see 'O imenu Hrvat i Srbin' (1928), in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay*, 89–91.

of Slavic tribes, but due to their numerical inferiority they eventually underwent a process of Slavicisation, though they lent their names (i.e. Croat and Serb) to the Slavs.[79] In an article from 1922 Županič had identified the original 'pre-Aryan' inhabitants of the Balkans as Alarodian Pelasgians (who thus inhabited the Balkans before the arrival of the Aryan Hellenes, Thracians and Illyrians).[80] Županič blamed Aryan-Slavic admixture with the dark Pelasgians (who were probably the product of an admixture of Mediterranean, Negroid and Asiatic racial strains) for having turned the previously blond, blue-eyed, fair-skinned and long-headed Serbs into the contemporary people of 'Adriatic type' (i.e. the Dinaric race).[81]

Šufflay had thus argued that the Croats possessed a marked non-Aryan racial strain in their heritage: the original Croats were a Turanian-Avar warrior caste. The Slavic racial strain itself was best preserved among the Croats who spoke the old *čakavian* dialect (in Istria and the Adriatic littoral and islands), since they were 'very closely related' by language and blood to the Russians.[82] Russia, as a Eurasian country, was of particular cultural and historical interest to Šufflay. He argued that an anthropological-racial link existed between the Russians, Manchurians and Japanese due to the centuries-long admixture of European and Mongol blood throughout northern Asia and Russia (particularly visible in the Caucasoid looking people of northern Japan, the Ainu).[83]

In contrast to the Turanian-Avar north of Croatia and the Slavic *čakavian* Adriatic, Vlach (or Romanised Illyrian-Thracian) blood had created the Dinaric racial type of the Herzegovinians, Dalmatians and Montenegrins.[84] Šufflay also commented on the Dinaric racial character of the Albanians, and described the heroic medieval Albanian knights who had fought the Ottoman Turks, such as the famous Skenderbeg (George Kastrioti), as belonging to that 'magnificent type of people of violent Dinaric blood.'[85] The Serbs also contained a strong Dinaric (i.e. Illyrian-Albanian) component.[86] Admixture with Vlach blood, which Šufflay described as the 'dark,

[79] Šufflay, 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja', 31 and 'O imenu Hrvat i Srbin', 90–91.
[80] Niko Županič, 'Tragom za Pelazgima', *Narodna starina*, 2, No. 3 (1922): 211–227.
[81] Ibid., 223–224.
[82] Šufflay, 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja', 31.
[83] ' "Westernizacija" na Pacifiku' (1926), and 'Hrvati u sredovječnom svjetskom viru' (1930) in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay,* 3, 146.
[84] Šufflay, 'Značajke hrvatske nacije', 37.
[85] 'Sredovječni dinaste Albanije i Crne Gore' (1924), in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay*, 99.
[86] Šufflay, 'Hrvatska krv i zemlja', 32–33.

pastoral blood, very foreign to the Slavic element', had been much more pronounced among the Serbs than the Croats.[87] In this respect, Šufflay was particularly satisfied by the work of the Serbian historian Dušan Popović (1894–1985), who, in a book published in 1927, readily admitted the heavy Vlach or Tzintzar contribution to Serbian culture and ethnic composition.[88] Upon the basis of Popović's study, Šufflay felt confident enough to state that the Serbs of his day were still affected by the 'Tzintzar blood, as it was brewed throughout the centuries in a Byzantine-Turkish retort.'[89]

Although he stressed Croatia's Slavic cultural-spiritual and ethnolinguistic roots, and even supported the Turanian-Avar theory of proto-Croat origins, Šufflay's theory of Croatian national individuality placed—in comparison to Lukas—a much greater emphasis on Croatia's Occidental (i.e. Western Catholic) cultural and historical traditions. This type of, one might say, exaggerated Croat Occidentalism emerged during the 1920s mainly as the result of the Croatian experience of living in a common state with Serbia. Indeed, in the case of Šufflay, a good deal of his intellectual opposition to Yugoslavism seems to have stemmed from an acceptance of Western ethnocentric and racialist tenets in regard to the civilisational position of the Balkans, to which Serbia, and Yugoslavia as a whole, were said to belong. Anti-Yugoslavist nationalists such as Šufflay were uncomfortable with the Western perception that Croatia might also belong to the backward, uncivilised and 'Asiatic' Balkans. In conversation with a French journalist in 1935, even the former Yugoslavist politician Ante Trumbić expressed the hope that the Frenchman would not compare the 'pure occidental' Croats (and Slovenes) 'with these half-civilized Serbs, the Balkan hybrids of Slavs and Turks. They are barbarians, even their chiefs, whose occidentalism goes no further than their phraseology and the cut of their clothes.'[90]

As Maria Todorova has highlighted, by the 1930s there was, in both European and North American academic and popular circles, an embedded stereotype of the Balkan peoples as 'cruel, boorish, unstable and

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87 Ibid.

88 In 1927 Šufflay reviewed the study *O Cincarima: Prilozi pitanju postanke naše čaršije* by the Serbian historian Dušan Popović. See the Croatian edition, Dušan J. Popović, *Cincari* (Zagreb: MISL, 2007) and 'Cincarska krv' (1927), in Šufflay, *Hrvatska u svijetlu svjetske historije i politike*, 48–51.

89 Ibid., 51.

90 Trumbić in conversation with Henri Pozzi, cited in Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans*, 35.

unpredictable.'[91] These peculiarly 'Balkan' traits were further associated with 'Oriental' characteristics, for the Balkans were regarded as belonging more to Asia than Europe. Among these Oriental traits were 'filth, propensity for intrigue, laziness, superstitiousness and inefficiency.'[92] These anti-Balkan prejudices started to evolve at the time of the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, which were accompanied by a great many atrocities committed by all the warring sides, Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Montenegrins and Ottoman Turks.[93]

During the interwar period, Western observers had begun to add racial prejudices to their cultural stereotypes of Balkan peoples: 'the racial verdict over the Balkans began with a more open rendering of the formerly subdued and nonjudgmental motif of racial mixture.'[94] Western travellers to the Balkans had long taken note of the 'Tower of Babel' phenomenon in the region, and by the 1920s, the once detached observation of racial differences began to 'produce feelings of revulsion and impurity.'[95] Racially minded Western observers identified the typical Balkan racial traits as consisting of high-cheek bones, a dark complexion, a broad face, thick lips and a broad nose, traits opposite to the ideal of the white European of Classical Greek appearance. Balkan racial features were apparently found among all the peoples of the peninsula (including modern Greeks) although the Balkan racial type was often referred to specifically as the 'Slav type.'[96] The inhabitants of the Balkans were thus regarded as belonging predominantly to an intermediate racial type, comprising a 'blend of various Indo-European and Asiatic tribes.'[97] Hans Günther, for one, had argued that '. . . in European south Russia and in the Balkan Peninsula the appearance of the peoples begins to change; men of Inner and Hither Asiatic racial origin appear, becoming more and more frequent.'[98]

In light of the close connection that had been made between the terms 'Balkan', 'Slav' and 'Asiatic' in Western European racial discourses, anti-Yugoslavist Croat nationalists such as Šufflay found themselves trying to prove that Croats were Catholic and Western rather than Slavic and

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[91] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 119–120.
[92] Ibid., 119.
[93] Ibid., 121.
[94] Ibid., 123.
[95] Ibid., 124.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., 123.
[98] Günther, *Racial Elements of European History*, 96.

Balkan in a cultural and historical sense. Šufflay's theory of Croat Occidentalism proposed that the differences between Croats and Serbs were based primarily on religious-civilisational, and not ethnic-racial, factors. Such a theory posed a serious ideological problem for anti-Yugoslavist Croat nationalists because it would seem to justify the Greater Serbian idea that the Croats did not possess a unique ethnocultural identity of their own but were simply Latinised and/or Germanised Slavs. In 1923 the Serbian writer Ljubomir Mičić ridiculed Croat Occidentalism by claiming that Croatian culture was 'the illegitimate child of an unnatural marriage between a trained monkey and a parrot whose real name and address is Most Esteemed Sir, Office of the Imitation of Culture, Zagreb.'[99] Šufflay's theory of Croat Occidentalism was unable to conceptually integrate the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Croatian nation; Šufflay had written little or nothing on this subject even though it represented a very important question for Croatian nationalism. As regards the question of racial origins, Šufflay had basically argued that the Croats were an admixture of Turanian, Vlach (Dinaric) and Slavic racial groups, the latter also carrying (via the Russians) a slight Mongol racial strain. It was precisely Šufflay's theory of Croatia's 'white' Occidentalism that Ustasha ideologists would wholeheartedly adopt, while his theory of the partial Turanian-Mongol origins of the Croats was conveniently ignored.

The Iranian and Gothic Theories of Croat Origins

During the interwar period Šufflay was alone among leading Croat anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals in postulating a non-Aryan origin for the proto-Croats, or stressing the importance of non-Aryan racial components in the Croatian ethnic-racial composition. In 1929 Ivan Krajač, for example, had argued that the Croats originated from one of the main centres of historical Aryan settlement. As he explained, 'the cradle of the Aryan race is in the mountains of central Asia' and it was from this original homeland that the Aryans began to spread forth and settle other lands.[100] One of the new centres of Aryan settlement was the Carpathian Mountains and the surroundings of Cracow, which, according to tradition, was the former homeland of the Croats.[101] The Aryan race possessed a deep spiritual

[99] Cited in Yeomans, 'Of "Yugoslav Barbarians"', 99.
[100] Krajač, 'Narodne planine i Hrvati', no. 4, 85.
[101] Ibid.

connection to mountains, and this was clearly seen in the history and national psyche of the Croats. Accordingly, as members of 'the great Aryan family of peoples', the Croats carried 'a more or less inherited relation and love toward the world of mountains and the majesty of its phenomena.'[102]

The 'Indo-European-Aryan' interpretation was also the dominant theory on the origins of the religion of the old Croats during the interwar period.[103] Although Šufflay had defined the Croats as partially non-Aryan, he had also accepted Peisker's theory regarding the decisive influence of Iran on the cultural and spiritual life of the old Slavs. In the south Russian steppes, Šufflay wrote, the old Slavs adopted the religious teachings of Zoroaster, which had reached the Slavs by way of Iranian slaves who had escaped from their Turanian nomadic masters and found refuge among the peaceful Slavs.[104] He was keenly interested in the studies on ancient Slavic religion undertaken by Peisker, who 'on the basis of numerous sacred sites' proved that the old Slavs had been 'followers of Zarathustra and that [his] teachings expanded with a colossal force from Iran to the northern Eurasian plains.'[105] Peisker had argued that numerous old Slavic toponyms contained clear traces of the dualistic cult of good and evil deities, which pointed to a Zoroastrian origin. Zoroastrianism had, Šufflay explained, provided 'solace' to the peaceful agriculturalist Slavs, who had long suffered from the terror of Turanian nomadic raids.[106] Traces of Zoroastrian dualism could also be found in the medieval Slavic Balkans, particularly among the Bosnian Bogomils.[107]

Šufflay was also partial to the theory on the Old Iranian origin of medieval or Old Croatian art expounded by the eminent Polish-German art historian Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941).[108] In 1926 Strzygowski presented the 'Barbarian' thesis on the origins of European medieval art, or as one Croat art historian explains, 'the decisive component in the formation of Early Medieval art was sought in the primitive creativity of the newly arrived

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[102] Ivan Krajač, 'Narodne planine i Hrvati', *Hrvatski planinar*, XXV, No. 5 (1929): 111.

[103] Nikola Crnković, 'Vjera i svetišta starih Hrvata: Novi putovi istraživanja', *Croatica Christiana Periodica*, 18, No. 33 (1994): 61.

[104] 'Otkriće velike tajne slavenskog poganstva' (1928), in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay*, 104.

[105] 'Zaratuštra u crvenoj Hrvatskoj' (1931), in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay*, 21.

[106] 'Otkriće velike tajne slavenskog poganstva', 104.

[107] 'Zaratuštra u crvenoj Hrvatskoj', 23.

[108] 'Starohrvatska baština iz pradomovine' (1929), in Sagrak and Ahmeti eds. *Dr. Milan pl. Šufflay*, 120.

Barbarian Germanic and Slavic ethnic peoples.'[109] Strzygowski argued that the pre-Romanesque Old Croatian art and architecture of medieval Dalmatia, which was characterised by irregular stone churches and latticed decorative motifs or plaitwork, was of Nordic-Germanic origin. According to Strzygowski, the early stone buildings of Croatian Dalmatia were constructed, not according to the stone architecture of Classical Antiquity, but to the Nordic wooden architecture of the proto-Slavic and Germanic homeland in northern Europe.[110] The proto-Croats had thus been artistically influenced, not by the Classical heritage of Roman Dalmatia, but by their Germanic neighbours in north-eastern Europe.[111] Strzygowski had also observed striking artistic and architectural similarities between medieval Croatia and Persia in the period of the Sassanid dynasty (AD 224–651).[112] Strzygowski concluded that Iranian tribes must have reached the eastern Adriatic coast, where they were later assimilated by the Slavic Croats.[113]

Among the interwar Croat nationalist intellectuals who emphasised the strong cultural, religious and ethnic links between the proto-Slavs and Iran was Ivo Pilar. He welcomed the research and theories on Old Slavic religion and art expounded by Jan Peisker (with whom Pilar was in contact) and Strzygowski. In his work from 1931 entitled 'On Dualism in the Faith of the Old Slavs and its Origin and Significance', Pilar argued that the religion of the old Slavs, in all probability, originated from Iran.[114] Many factors pointed to this being the case: the geographical proximity between southern Russia and Iran; linguistic similarities between the Slavic and Iranian languages (both belonged to the satem group of Indo-European languages); and the fact that the Persians had established the first world state in history—in which Zoroastrianism was the state religion—and which therefore must have exerted an influence on the Russian territorial massif.[115] Furthermore, noted Pilar, Zoroaster's teachings extolled the virtues of agriculture and the righteous peasantry as the

[109] See Radovan Ivančević, 'The Pre-Romanesque in Croatia—a Question of Interpretation', in Ivan Supičić ed. *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: A Cultural Survey* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1999), 420.

[110] Ibid., 420–423.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Vladimir Košćak, 'Iranska teorija o podrijetlu Hrvata', 111.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ivo Pilar, 'O dualizmu u vjeri starih Slovjena i o njegovu podrijetlu i značenju', *Pilar—Časopis za društvene i humanističke studije*, 2, No. 3 (2007): 91–151.

[115] Ibid., 100–101, 144.

ideal of a pious religious life, contrasting that ideal to the evil ways of the marauding nomads.[116] The theory of the Zoroastrian origin of Old Slavic religion would thus explain one of the main characteristics of traditional Slavic culture—continually noted by scholars since Herder—namely, the fact that the Slavs were known primarily as a people dedicated to an agriculturalist way of life.[117] Since Zoroastrianism considered agriculture a 'religious duty', the central importance of sedentary farming to the Slavs could thus be historically explained by the proto-Slavic adherence to Zoroaster's religious teachings.[118] Pilar believed that an in-depth study of the religious, linguistic and ethnic relations between Slavs and Iranians would lead to a greater knowledge and understanding of the 'ethnic formation and the whole prehistory of the Slavs.'[119] Pilar was thus keen to highlight the deep historical, spiritiual and ethnic links between all Slavs (and not just the Croats) and Iran.

Indeed, before his death in 1933, Pilar seemed to have been moving toward the articulation of a 'pan-Iranian-Slavist' style of Croatian nationalism, which is suggested by a memorandum he wrote sometime in the early 1930s, addressed to Stjepan Radić's successor as president of the Croatian Peasant Party, Vladko Maček (1879–1964). Pilar argued that the ideology needed in the struggle against Serbian 'Byzantinism' could be found, in its essence, in the work of Antun Radić; his ideology asserted that 'the Croats, and all Slavs, already possessed a great and deep culture at the time of their arrival from the north, [a culture] which was best preserved amongst our peasantry.'[120] Pilar stated that Radić's arguments had received scholarly validation from the research findings of Strzygowski and Peisker. All that remained to do was to further elaborate this ideology, which had to reach the entire nation; the Croats needed to learn that the Old Slavic-Croatian culture was of 'Iranian/Zoroastrian origin.'[121] Through such knowledge the Croats and other Slavs would rediscover their role as the 'bearers of one of the most perfect cultures that the human race has ever known, a culture that rested on agriculture, i.e. the peasant way

[116] Ibid., 100.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 149.
[120] Ivo Pilar, 'Spomenica u pogledu organizacije obrane i otpora Hrvatskoga naroda/ H.N./ u sadanjoj njegovoj situaciji', *Pilar—Časopis za društvene i humanističke studije*, 5, No. 10 (2010): 144.
[121] Ibid.

of life.'[122] Through the combination of 'peasant politics' and the 'cultural program of Slavdom', the Croats could overthrow Byzantinism and create a much more advantageous situation for themselves in the Yugoslav state. This would lead to the strengthening of the Croatian people as 'the most distinguished bearer of the Old Slavic culture.'[123] Pilar made clear his intellectual opposition to Yugoslavism; his opposition rested on the theory that 'nations and national convictions are biological phenomena [for] they are like trees that grow for centuries.'[124] This theory did not apply in the case of Yugoslav nationalism as this ideology did not rest on secure historical foundations.

On the other hand, Pilar cautiously warned against the ideological adoption of an exclusively pro-Western cultural orientation. He noted that writers such as the German philosopher Oswald Spengler (1880–1936) had warned of the collapse of an increasingly decadent European culture. Pilar thus wrote that 'the Russian pan-Slavists had not been completely wrong when they argued that Slavdom was called to save corrupt Europe from collapse.'[125] The Russian pan-Slavists had, however, mistakenly believed that salvation could only come from 'Slavic-Byzantine culture, which is a poison for Europe, just as it had been the cause of the collapse of Imperial Russia.'[126] Pilar argued that salvation for the Slavs and Europe was only possible through a return to the historic foundations of Slavic culture: 'Zoroaster's brilliant cultural and social ideas of activism and the establishment of the state on the basis of agriculture and the peasant way of life.'[127]

Pilar claimed that the Slavs could revive Europe if they succeeded in remoulding Zoroastrianism into a 'modern form.'[128] Iranian Zoroastrianism would be able to restore activism and the 'sense for practical life' among the modern Croats, who had lost the sense for practical and rational activism due, in part, to a 'Slavic hypertrophy of sentimentality.' As the Slavs had also suffered from the characteristic 'amorality' of Byzantinism, Pilar called for the revival of the Slavic ethical tradition, which was also inherited from 'Iranian Zoroastrianism.'[129] In order to ensure the rebirth

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122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid., 145.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid., 145–146.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.

of the Croatian people, Pilar also argued that future marriages in Croatia should be contracted only between persons who were Croats 'according to both race and convictions', so that 'every young Croatian man receives an honourable Croatian girl, and every Croatian girl an honourable young Croatian man for a spouse.'[130] Accordingly, in order to instruct the nation on the importance of healthy marriages, it would be necessary to introduce a 'scientifically well founded' eugenics program.[131] In another memorandum directed to the leadership of the Croat Peasant Party (written in 1931) Pilar again argued that 'the Slavs in Europe are the bearers of the historical Iranian-Zoroastrian Aryan religion and culture.' This culture was, he explained, the best religious product that the 'Aryan spirit' had ever created and it was particularly important that this 'authentically Aryan' culture stood, according to its 'high ethical content', in opposition to 'Romanism, and particularly to Hellenism and its decadent form: Byzantinism.'[132]

Pilar's theory on the ethnic, cultural and religious kinship between the proto-Slavs/Croats and Iranians reflected a growing academic interest, both in and outside of Croatia, on the question of the precise ethnolinguistic origins of the Croats. During the interwar period, a growing number of historians, philologists and archaeologists pointed to the strong possibility of the Iranian origin of the proto-Croats. In the early 1920s the Russian Slavist Alexey Sobolewski and German Slavist Max Wasmer had both proposed the theory of the Iranian origin of the Croatian ethnic name, based on the discoveries of the names *Horoathos*/*Horouathos* or *Choroathos*/*Chorouathos* in Tanais; Wasmer derived the Tanais names from the Iranian word 'Hu-urvatha' (meaning 'friend').[133] In 1925 the Slovenian Slavist F. Ramovš concluded that the proto-Croats were one of the tribes of the ethnic Iranian Sarmatian people that had migrated from the outer rim of the Carpathians toward the Vistula.[134] In 1935 the Slovenian historian Ljudmil Hauptmann (1884–1968) presented the first detailed theory on the Iranian origins of the proto-Croats. According to Hauptmann, following

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[130] Ibid., 134.

[131] Ibid.

[132] [Dr. Ivo Pilar] 'Koncept Pilarove spomenice o zadaćama Hrvatske seljačke stranke nakon donošenja Oktroiranog ustava Kraljevine Jugoslavije (1931.)', *Pilar—Časopis za društvene i humanističke studije*, VI, No. 12 (2011): 110–111.

[133] Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, 274–275, Košćak, 'Iranska teorija', 110, and Stjepan Krizin Sakač, 'O kavkasko-iranskom podrijetlu Hrvata', *Život*, 18, No. 1 (1937): 8.

[134] Košćak, 'Iranska teorija', 110.

the invasion of the Huns in AD 375, the Iranian 'Huurvathi' ('Croats') were forced to leave their Sarmatian-Iranian homeland along the Kuban River between the Black Sea and Caucasus Mountains; together with the Circassian Serbs (and some other tribes), the Croats reached the Slavic settlements in the north Carpathians, where they gradually adopted the Slavic language and customs.[135]

Among Croat academics, the leading proponent of the Iranian theory was the Jesuit historian and Orientalist Stjepan Krizin Sakač (1890–1973). By the late 1930s Sakač had accepted Hauptmann's theory on the Iranian-Caucasian (i.e. Caucasus) origins of the Croats, while during the NDH he would trace the Croats' Iranian roots all the way to Achaemenid Iran. In an article from 1937 Sakač argued that Županić had not substantiated his theory on the origins of the proto-Croats, because there was little to connect the 'pre-European Alarodians' with the 'Aryan Slavs'; it was much more logical to derive the origins of the Slavic Croats from the 'Aryan Iranians.'[136] In their new homeland along the Vistula River, the Slavicised Iranian Croats had founded the new state of White Croatia, which led to the birth of a new people—the Slavic Croats—from an admixture of the Caucasian Iranians (Alans), Vistulan Slavs, the Antes or Antae (another Slavicised Iranian people) and a tribe of Circassians. Sakač argued that 'the strong and fresh Caucasian [Iranian] blood produced in one part of the primitive Slavic masses an enterprising and heroic Eurasian type, who had more sense for state organisation than the Slavic individualists and more initiative than the passive pure Slav' (Eurasian here is used as a geographical-cultural, and not racial, term).[137]

In an article from 1938 Sakač argued that the historical terms of 'White' (*Bijela*) and 'Red' (*Crvena*) Croatia were of Iranian cultural origin.[138] According to the accounts of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus and the Priest of Dioclea, these names had denoted the proto-homeland of the Croats in southern Poland and northern Bohemia (*White Croatia*), and the territories of western ('White') and southern ('Red') Croatia along the Adriatic in the early medieval period. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) had discovered that the ancient Iranians, like the Chinese, denoted the four cardinal points of the earth with colours:

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135 Ibid., 111.

136 Sakač, 'O kavkasko-iranskom podrijetlu Hrvata', 3, 6.

137 Ibid., 18.

138 Stjepan Krizin Sakač, 'Pravo značenje naziva "bijela" i "crvena" Hrvatska', *Život*, 19, No. 6 (1938): 332–338.

'black' for north, 'red' for south, 'white' for west and 'green' or 'blue' for east.[139] In line with Saussure's research findings, Sakač explained that the Slavicised Iranian Croats had retained this part of their Iranian cultural heritage when they gave the names 'White' and 'Red' Croatia to parts of their new Adriatic homeland.[140] Sakač maintained that his linguistic theory confirmed the etymological and historical theories of Wasmer and Hauptmann; it further confirmed the theories of Jelić and Strzygowski on the Persian origins of Croatian art, and the theories of Peisker and Šufflay on the Zoroastrian roots of Slavic religion.[141] Sakač further argued, in an article from 1939, that the Croatian title of 'Ban' was of Persian, and not (as had previously been argued) Avar origin.[142]

By the late 1930s the Iranian theory had gained respectability in academic and popular circles in Croatia. The theory reached a wider audience with the 1939 publication of the large volume entitled 'The Culture of the Croats throughout a Thousand Years', written by the Croatian journalist, publisher and historical writer Josip Horvat (1896–1968). Horvat supported the theory of the Iranian-Caucasian origin of the proto-Croats or 'Huurvathi', as expounded by Hauptmann and Sakač.[143] In their new Balkan homeland, the warrior and conquering White Croats 'erase the Avars from history', and subsequently formed the new ruling elite of the remnants of the Avars and their former Slavic subjects.[144] According to Horvat, the medieval Croats were thus formed from the admixture of these 'three ethnic elements: the White Croats, the remnants of the Avars and their Slavic subjects, alongside the remnants of Roman settlers and autochthonous Balkan inhabitants.'[145]

The fair-haired Slavs had already started, during their north-south migration, to acquire 'a darker shade of complexion' through admixture with the earlier inhabitants of central Europe.[146] All the same, the Croats retained a predominantly fair complexion throughout the Middle Ages. Horvat wrote that the 'Croatian type' had stood out in the 'Saracen world' of medieval Spain; the Islamic regions of Spain contained a population of Islamicised Croats (who had arrived in Spain either as slaves or adventurers), some

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139 Ibid., 334.
140 Ibid., 335.
141 Ibid., 337.
142 Stjepan Krizin Sakač, 'Otkuda Hrvatima "Ban"?', *Život*, 20, No. 7 (1939): 388–400.
143 Josip Horvat, *Kultura Hrvata kroz 1000 godina* (Zagreb: "Tipografija", 1939), 28–34.
144 Ibid., 34.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid., 26.

of whom became noted military leaders and were known by the name *El Sakalaw* ('Slav'). This medieval Croatian type was 'blue-eyed and fair-haired [with] a slender waist.'[147] When discussing Bosnian ethnic history, Horvat argued that the 'purest old Croatian type of mankind' was also preserved in those Croatian families which converted to Islam: 'anthropological research has established that, amongst the inhabitants of Bosnia, the fair-haired type is best preserved in the aristocratic Muslim families.'[148]

In an essay from 1940 the Croatian Jewish archaeologist Zdenko Vinski (1913–1996) argued that the Iranian theory of Croat origins was closely related to the questions of the ethnic identity of the Antes (who were probably a Slavic people with a Sarmatian, that is Iranian, ruling class), and the historical connections between Iran ('Internal Iran') and the Caucasus region ('External Iran').[149] According to Vinski the ancient high cultures of the Near East had developed from the creation of states that arose as a result of the 'influx of Indo-European and Semitic patriarchal nomads.'[150] The 'old-oriental high cultures' were greatly influenced by three races: the 'Semitic races', 'homo europaeus' (Nordic race) and 'homo tauricus' (Near Eastern race).[151] The Medes and Persians represented the ruling elite of ancient Iran; these peoples were warriors and horsebreeders and both belonged to *Homo Europaeus*.[152]

The Gothic theory of Croatian origins also gained some intellectual, and popular, currency during the interwar period. In Croatia, the leading proponents of this theory were the anti-Yugoslavist historian and Catholic priest Kerubin Šegvić (1867–1945) and the Croatian National Socialist politican and writer Stjepan Buć (1888–1975). Šegvić relied mainly on the medieval chronicle *Historia Salonitana* of Thomas Archdeacon of Split to argue that the Croats from White Croatia (Poland in Thomas' account) were of Gothic origin (and Slavic tongue).[153] In his book on Thomas' life and work from 1927, in which he first introduced the Gothic theory, Šegvić

147 Ibid., 84.
148 Ibid., 247.
149 Zdenko Vinski, *Uz problematiku starog Irana i Kavkaza s osvrtom na podrijetlo Anta i Bijelih Hrvata* (Zagreb: "Grafika", 1940), 20–22.
150 Ibid., 7.
151 Ibid., 7, 23.
152 Ibid., 45fn, 15.
153 Kerubin Šegvić, *Toma Splićanin, državnik i pisac 1200.–1268.: Njegov život i njegovo djelo* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1927), 10fn, 140, 157–161.

remarked that Ludwig Gumplowicz had 'proven that the name of Goths for the Croats is not without foundation.'[154]

In an article from 1935 entitled 'The Gothic Origin of the Croats', published in the German journal *Nordische Welt*, Šegvić argued that 'Russian-Byzantine' pan-Slavism was primarily to blame for having spread the 'error' of the Slavic theory of proto-Croat origins.[155] Šegvić noted that the Slovenian historian Jože Rus had sought the origin of the name 'Croat' in the Germanic-Gothic language: 'Croat' was thus derived from the name *Hrôthgutans*. 'Gutans' (meaning 'brave' and 'bold') was the usual name for the Goths, while 'Hred' (or 'Hraedas' and 'Hrôthi') was a 'decorative adjective' derived from the old Germanic root 'hrôt', which meant 'victory' or 'glory.'[156] According to the German historian Ernst Förstemann (1822–1906), in the Middle Ages 'hrôthi' had a number of forms, including 'Hruat' and 'Chrout.' Šegvić argued that the Germanic-Gothic name Hruat 'completely corresponded' to the Croatian ethnic name (a medieval inscription had referred to Branimir as *Dux Cruatorum*).[157] The 'seven or eight noble tribes' from Poland that conquered Dalmatia (as recounted in Thomas' account) were thus 'Hrôth-gutans' i.e. 'victorious or glorious Goths'. Over time the name 'Gutans' was dropped, leaving the prefix Hrôthi, which eventually became the Croat ethnic name 'Hroati.'[158] According to Šegvić, the name 'Hrôthgutans' was linked to the traditional depiction of the Croats in their national epics as a 'nation of masters' (*Herrenvolk*).[159]

Šegvić's theory found support from the National Socialist sympathiser and racial theorist Stjepan Buć. In a lecture on the life and politics of Ante Starčević, given to Croatian university students in 1936, Buć stressed the importance of the Dinaric region of Lika for the development of Starčević's character. As Buć explained, beginning in the fifth century AD, Lika was 'heavily settled by our brothers by blood, the Goths, that singular [group of] mankind, a few hundred of whom were in the position to create an independent state, and who, with rather small armies [made] both Rome and Byzantium tremble.'[160] Lika was also exposed to the settlement of

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154 Ibid., 9fn, 138.

155 Cherubin Segvić (Kerubin Šegvić), 'Die gotische Abstammung der Kroaten', *Nordische Welt*, 9–12 (Berlin: Verlag Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1935): 1–2.

156 Ibid., 35.

157 Ibid.

158 Ibid.

159 Ibid., 35–36.

160 Stjepan Buć, *Temeljne misli nauke Dra. Ante Starčevića* (Zagreb: Tiskara "Danica", 1936), 5–6.

the 'ruling tribes' that arrived from northern Europe under the name of Croats.[161] Unfortunately, a good deal of the best Gothic-Croatian blood had fallen in the battles against the Turks; but a sizeable proportion of the 'best element' still existed, particularly in the karst Dinaric region. Starčević himself was a 'racial man' who had emerged from the 'national blood.'[162] Although Starčević had to admit that there were hardly any Croats of 'pure blood' left, and that all peoples were of mixed blood, the most important question, Buć maintained, was the 'decisive [racial] element in those mixtures.' The 'Slavoserb breed', for example, consisted mainly of 'nomadic elements' from the Balkans.[163] In the conclusion to his lecture, Buć claimed that Starčević had 'seventy years ago stressed the racial idea upon which Adolf Hitler has marked his program for the rebirth and organisation of German national life.'[164]

In 1940 Buć held another lecture in Zagreb in which he attacked the pan-Slavist model of traditional Croatian historiography. Like Šufflay before him, Buć accepted Jan Peisker's theory on the political and organisational inferiority of the Slavs in comparison to the Germanic peoples.[165] Buć, however, criticised Šufflay for himself being a romantic Slavophile because he had also maintained that the Croats had brought their 'proto-Slavic heritage' with them to the Adriatic.[166] Buć further rejected the Iranian-Caucasian theory of Croatian origins, arguing that 'our ancestors came to these regions from the north of Europe, not from Asia.' Buć thus identified the Iranians with 'Asiatic blood' (even though racial anthropologists and theorists from Gobineau to Günther had viewed the ancient Persians as an impeccably Aryan/Nordic people).[167] For Buć, the Croats were of Germanic-Gothic origin, namely, the descendants of the Hrothgutans (*Hredj-Goti*).[168] He naturally accepted Strzygowski's Nordic-Germanic theory on the origins of Old Croatian art. Buć thought that it was 'childish' to believe that the 'cowardly Slavs from the Polabian swamps' could have

[161] Ibid., 6.
[162] Ibid., 7.
[163] Ibid., 26–27.
[164] Ibid., 30.
[165] Stjepan Buć, *Naši službeni povjesničari i pitanje podrijetla Hrvata* (Zagreb: 1940), 10–11.
[166] Ibid., 9.
[167] Ibid., 15.
[168] Ibid., 16–24.

possibly produced the creative works of Old Croatian art, which was 'an expression of a better, chosen race.'[169]

Buć's more radical form of anti-pan-Slavism was not generally accepted among anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals, such as Filip Lukas, who still underlined the importance of the Slavic element in the Croatian ethnic-racial composition. Furthermore, the Iranian theory of Croat origins had much sounder philological and historical arguments in its favour than the Gothic theory, which had already been rejected by leading scholars such as the German philologist Max Wasmer.[170] Therefore, the Iranian theory would receive greater publicity in the NDH's racial discourse, even though the Goths were still counted among the main Indo-European peoples that had contributed to the Croatian ethnolinguistic make-up. What is important to note is that both the Iranian and Gothic theories of Croatian origins stressed the central role of a non-Slavic warrior ruling class in the formation of the Croatian people; this idea constituted a significant part of the NDH's racial ideology.

Croatian Racial Discourse and the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Another significant aspect of anti-Yugoslavist Croatian racial ideology, both before and after 1941, was the question of the racial origin and identity of the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In general, anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals in the interwar period wholeheartedly accepted Starčević's theory on the Croatian blood origins of the Bosnian Muslims. The interwar intellectual effort to 'Croaticise' the Muslims was made easier by the fact that the majority of Bosnian Muslims had not yet passed through the process of modern national integration. In the interwar period, most Bosnian Muslims considered themselves Bosnian (in a regional sense) or simply Muslim. There was, however, a sizeable minority of Muslims who considered themselves nationally Croatian. Most of these Muslims had been educated at the University of Zagreb (after the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878), where they fell under the influence of Starčevićist ideas, and the great majority of the first generation of Muslims with a tertiary education regarded

[169] Ibid., 21.
[170] Dvornik, *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, 274.

themselves as nationally Croat.[171] Although there were also Bosnian Muslims who considered themselves Serbs, the strong anti-Islamic prejudice of mainstream Serbian nationalism precluded the wider assimilation of Muslims to Serbian nationhood.[172] The main interwar Muslim political party was called the 'Yugoslav Muslim Organisation' (*Jugoslavenska muslimanska organizacija*, JMO), but it tended to side with the Croats in the struggle against Serbian centralism.[173]

One of the leading interwar anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals who devoted attention to the question of Bosnian Muslim racial identity was Ćiro Truhelka. In his article from 1934 entitled 'On the Origin of the Bosnian Muslims', Truhelka argued that intermarriage between the Muslims of Ottoman-ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Turks had been 'extraordinarily rare', because the Bosnian Muslims practiced a policy of strict endogamy.[174] In any case, very few 'ethnic elements of the Ural-Altaic race' had ever settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina during four centuries of Ottoman rule.[175] To be sure, many Ottoman Turk administrators and officials lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina for short periods of time; a few of them ended up marrying local Muslim girls, so that their descendants inherited 'a certain portion of Turanian blood.' However, the children and grandchildren of these Ottoman settlers continued marrying local Muslim girls, which meant that their 'foreign blood' was 'resorbed according to Mendelian laws', and was thus hardly noticeable by the third generation. As Truhelka explained, the formation of racial type was actually more dependent on the 'female portion of blood' rather than the blood inherited from the male.[176] The small number of intermarriages between Bosnian Muslims and Turks had a negligible effect on the racial character of the former. In fact, the Bosnian Muslims felt contempt for the Ottoman Turks (or *Turkuše*) and very few Bosnians could speak Turkish.[177] The Bosnian Muslims had maintained the purity of their Croatian *ikavian*

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171 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 365. Also see Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 230.

172 Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia*, 362–363.

173 Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 165–166.

174 Ćiro Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu bosanskih muslimana' (1934) in Petar Šarac and Miljenko Primorac eds. *Hrvatsko podrijetlo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana: Rasprave i članci* (Zagreb: Hrvatska tiskara, 1992), 16.

175 Ibid., 13.

176 Ibid., 16.

177 Ibid., 16–17.

subdialect, which showed that they remained, like their ancestors, 'a branch of Slavdom.'[178]

The Bosnian Muslim practice of endogamy had ensured 'the preservation of the Croatian racial element.' In fact, the Croatian Muslims could be considered the racially purest Slavs in all of Europe.[179] The Catholics of Bosnia and Herzegovina had also managed to preserve their Croatian racial inheritance more or less intact, for they too were subject to the practice of 'confessional endogamy'; the only other Catholics they could intermarry with came from neighbouring parts of Croatia. In contrast to the Muslims and Catholics, the Orthodox Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina inherited a good deal of foreign blood through admixture with the other Orthodox peoples of the Ottoman Empire, including Greeks, Armenians, Vlachs and Bulgarians.[180] In an anthropological sense the Bosnian Muslims were a people of great height with broad chests; in fact, alongside the Scandinavians, they were on average the tallest people in Europe.[181] The shape of the head had 'the well known characteristics of the Dinaric race,' and Truhelka traced the origins of this race in the western Balkans to the end of the Neolithic period.[182] Contrary to the prevailing theory of the Nordic (i.e. dolichocephalic) origin of the proto-Slavs, Truhelka argued that the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans also led to the strengthening of the 'brachycephalic elements' in the Dinaric race. Furthermore, in contrast to the anthropological argument found in his text from 1907, in this article, Truhelka wrote that there was little difference among the Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to height and skull shape.[183]

Truhelka, however, continued to anthropologically distinguish the Muslim and Catholic population from the Orthodox on the basis of pigmentation, which was at least as important, if not more, as 'a factor in forming and determining race.' The Catholics and Muslims thus possessed a greater percentage of fair hair, light eyes and a fair complexion: 47, 96%

[178] Ibid., 17.
[179] Ibid., 16.
[180] Ibid., 15–16.
[181] Ibid., 18.
[182] Ibid. According to Truhelka, brachycephaly was introduced to Europe by 'new racial elements' during the Neolithic. The oldest skull that could be classified as belonging to *Homo Dinaricus* (Dinaric race) was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century in a vineyard containing the remnants of a Neolithic settlement in Osijek in north-east Croatia. Ćiro Truhelka, 'Neolitsko naselje u Osijeku', *Narodna starina*, 8, No. 18 (1929): 1–6.
[183] Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu bosanskih muslimana', 18.

of the Orthodox population belonged to the 'dark type', while the share for this type among the Catholics and Muslims was 11% lower; 9, 40% of Muslims and 7, 51% of Catholics belonged to the 'pure fair type', while the Orthodox had a share of only 5, 59% for this type.[184] Truhelka concluded that these percentages showed that the Bosnian Muslims were racially closer to the Catholic population. He concluded:

> If it is further taken into consideration that the Slavs, who settled in the south of Europe, were the first representatives of the fair type, of which blond hair and blue eyes are the main racial traits, then it is of added importance that the pure fair type is most strongly represented among the Muslims, for according to this fact the Muslims would be the purest Slavs, in other words Croats, in Bosnia.[185]

Truhelka's arguments were welcomed by those Muslim intellectuals who had accepted a Croatian national consciousness. In 1938 one of the leading Muslim Croat nationalists, the journalist and writer Munir Šahinović-Ekremov (1900–1945), argued that 'the historical right of the Croats to Bosnia and Herzegovina' was not only a question of history or politics, but first and foremost, a matter of 'racial-biological significance.'[186] Accordingly, Šahinović wrote, 'if blood represents the basic condition for affiliation to a particular people, and the height of its purity the height of its racial worth, then the Muslims are certainly in the first place, ahead of all other remaining Croatian racial groups.'[187] Two years earlier, Šahinović had (like Stjepan Buć) connected Starčević's racial ideas to Adolf Hitler's racial ideology: Starčević had, 'with total justification disputed the equal worth of assimilated immigrants in our lands to Croats of pure, unmixed blood', and it was upon the basis of such a 'racial thesis', which stressed the importance of racial purity, that 'Hitler had regenerated Germany.'[188]

In an article from 1936 the Muslim Croat Abdulatif Dizdarević noted that people not personally familiar with Bosnia and Herzegovina might have expected to find an 'Oriental' type of man in those Muslim populated regions.[189] However, when travelling through Bosnia and Herzegovina one would only be able to hear the purest Croatian language being spoken

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184 Ibid., 18–19.

185 Ibid., 19.

186 Munir Šahinović-Ekremov, 'Muslimani u prošlosti i budućnosti hrvatstva' (1938), in Šarac and Primorac eds. *Hrvatsko podrijetlo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana*, 22.

187 Ibid.

188 Šahinović cited in Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 32.

189 Abdulatif Dizdarević, 'Bosansko-hercegovački muslimani Hrvati' (1936), in Šarac and Primorac eds. *Hrvatsko podrijetlo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana*, 39.

and come across 'sky-blue eyes, fair hair and fair complexions', with very few dark Oriental types.[190] The Muslim nobility of Ottoman Bosnia originated from the old Croatian nobility, which had been characterised by patriarchal customs and a culture of chivalry.[191] Throughout their history, both Catholic and Muslim Croats had spent centuries 'spilling our noble, healthy blood' in the defence of 'various degenerate Abdul-Hamids and Franz-Josefs.' In defending the Habsburg and Ottoman empires the Croats had thus acted as both the 'bulwark of Christianity' and the 'bulwark of Islam.'[192] As with other leading Muslim Croat intellectuals and writers, Dizdarević emphasised, in equal measure, race, language and history in order to establish the Croatian ethnic and national identity of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Muslims.[193]

Conclusion

During the interwar period, anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals, including Filip Lukas, Milan Šufflay, Ivo Pilar, Ćiro Truhelka, Stjepan Krizin Sakač and Josip Horvat had articulated theories intended to confirm the ethnic and national individuality of the Croatian people. These intellectuals had more or less adhered to an older, conservative, style of East-Central European or Herderian ethnonationalism. Lukas, for one, had written that the concept of a single universal humanity was an abstraction, because recorded history was the history of distinct peoples; in fact, the idea of universal humanity had originated among self-conscious nations.[194] The interwar anti-Yugoslavist intellectual discourse paved the way for the elaboration of the Ustasha concept of Croatian ethnic and racial identity. The Ustasha movement selectively adopted aspects of the ethnolinguistic and racial theories of anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals. In the NDH the interwar, anti-Yugoslavist racial discourse and Ustasha ethnic-racial ideology would form component parts of a coherent ethnonationalist and racialist ideology.

As regards the question of race, the anthropological theories of Lukas and Truhelka were particularly important for the NDH's racial discourse

190 Ibid.
191 Ibid., 40.
192 Ibid., 50.
193 Ibid., 41. Also see Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 32–33.
194 Lukas, 'Za hrvatsku kulturnu cjelovitost', 194.

because they had stressed the central role of the heroic and handsome Dinaric race—together with the Nordic element—in Croatian racial history and identity; Horvat had also noted the importance of the fair Nordic type. Lukas and Horvat had further emphasised the significance of racial mixture and the contributions of certain Indo-European peoples, such as the Illyrians and Goths, to the Croatian ethnic and racial make-up. Pilar, for his part, highlighted the links between Iranians and Slavs, but in the interwar period he had failed to make a clear ethnic distinction between Croats and other Slavs; this was in contrast to Sakač's theory, which had emphasised the specificity of the Iranian origin of the proto-Croatian warrior ruling caste. Of great importance for the idea of Croatian national individuality was the fact that Lukas, Sakač, Truhelka, Pilar and Horvat had all stressed the Croats' ethnic, cultural and civilisational position as a 'Western-Eastern' people i.e. the Croats were a bridge between the Latin-Germanic and Slavic parts of Europe and a bridge between Europe and the Islamic Orient.

To be sure, Milan Šufflay's idea of Croatia as a bulwark of the 'white West' was to be frequently cited in Ustasha propaganda during the NDH,[195] but since his Occidentalism left little room for the celebration of the non-Western components of Croatia's cultural heritage (particularly Bosnian Islam), Šuffay's theories had little intellectual influence on Ustasha ethnic and racial ideology. His work retained an importance for the Ustashe insofar as Šufflay himself became a symbol of national resistance to Serbian hegemony, and he was therefore hailed in the NDH as a martyr for the Croatian national cause.[196] For the Ustashe, the murder of the erudite and internationally renowned Croatian scholar by Serbian royalist agents in 1931 symbolised Balkan-Asiatic aggression on Croatia's European cultural heritage. On the other hand, Šufflay's theory of the Turanian origin of the proto-Croatian ruling caste was not mentioned in the NDH's press and cultural media. Admittedly, Lukas and Horvat had also noted a slight Tartar-Mongolian and Avar racial strain among the Croats, but the influence of this strain on the racial identity and character of the Croats was considered to be marginal.

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[195] See, for example, the article in the main Ustasha daily newspaper, written by the NDH's Director for National Enlightenment, Josip Milković, 'Drina—Hrvatska vjera i ustaška stvarnost', *Hrvatski narod*, 9 June 1941, 1.

[196] For one of a number of Ustasha panegyrics dedicated to Šufflay in the NDH, see the article, 'Dr. Milan Šufflay: Hrvatski historiozof i nacionalni hrvatski ideolog', *Hrvatski narod*, 27 April 1941, 5.

The anti-Yugoslavist intellectual discourse on Croatian ethnic and national identity in the interwar period had established the great significance of the question of the ethnolinguistic and anthropological-racial origins of the Croatian people. Other factors of nationhood, such as language, culture, territory and history, remained equally significant, but a European nation still needed to possess a 'lineage' in order to claim 'legitimacy and status.'[197] The proponents of Yugoslavism, for example, had justified their ideology and political aims upon the basis of ethnolinguistic and/or racial nationalism. Any Croatian nationalist critic of Yugoslavism in the interwar period could not have opposed this ideology without resorting, to at least some extent, to ethnolinguistic and racial arguments to the contrary.

[197] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 19.

CHAPTER SIX

THE INTERWAR USTASHA MOVEMENT AND ETHNOLINGUISTIC-RACIAL IDENTITY

Introduction

The lawyer and former secretary of the Croatian Party of Right, Ante Pavelić, founded the Ustasha Organisation (from 1933, 'Movement') in 1930 in Italy, where he enjoyed the sanctuary of the Fascist government of Benito Mussolini, which generally followed a foreign policy in the Balkans hostile to the state of Yugoslavia. The Ustasha movement was dedicated to liberating Croatia from Serbian oppression 'with all means, including an armed uprising, in order that it becomes a completely free and independent state on the whole of its ethnic and historic territory.' The aim of national liberation was reflected in the very name that Pavelić chose for his movement: the definition of the word 'Ustaša' is 'insurgent' or 'rebel.'[1] The central Ustasha ideas on nation and state were laid out in the central ideological document issued by Pavelić in 1933, generally known as 'The Principles of the Ustasha Movement' (*Načela ustaškog pokreta*). The document initially consisted of fifteen principles; slight changes were made from the end of 1940 so that the document included seventeen principles after 1941.[2] The Ustasha principles became dogma for Ustasha members and would form the political-ideological core around which the legal-constitutional system of the NDH would be based.

The Ustasha Principles

The Ustasha principles were based on two central concepts: the ethnic individuality of the Croatian nation and Croatian historic state right. Pavelić declared that, on the basis of these two facts, Croatia had a right to independent statehood. The first principle stated unambiguously:

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[1] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, 89. For more on the word 'ustaša' see Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, 69–70.

[2] Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret*, 124. An entire copy of the Ustasha principles can be found in this book, 124–128.

'the Croat nation [*narod*] is a self-contained ethnic unit, it is a nation in its own right and from an ethnic perspective is not identical with any other nation nor is it a part of, or a tribe of, any other nation.'[3] The next two principles referred to the national and territorial names of the Croat people and land—*Hrvat* (Croat) and *Hrvatska* (Croatia); the Croat ethnic name 'appeared in an ancient historical period, and under which [the Croats] arrived in their current homeland before 1300 years ago.' These names 'cannot and must not be substituted for any other name.'[4] Principles five and six stated that the Croats arrived in their current homeland, which they 'conquered', as a 'completely free' and 'completely organised' people, in both a 'military' and 'familial' sense. Principle seven stated that the Croats maintained their state 'throughout the centuries up until the end of the [first] world war'; they therefore have the right to restore 'their own completely free and independent Croat state' on their 'whole ethnic and historic territory', with the right to use all methods (no. 8);[5] 'no one who is not by descent and blood a member of the Croat nation can decide on Croat state and national matters in an independent Croat state' (no. 11); the peasantry is not only 'the base and the source of all life, rather it itself constitutes the Croat nation . . . in Croatia he who does not originate from a peasant family is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, not of Croat descent or blood but a foreign settler' (no. 13); and the 'moral strengths of the Croat nation lie in an orderly and religious family life . . . while the [Croat nation's] educational and cultural progress is based on the natural national genius' (no. 15).[6]

The brevity of the central ideological document of the Ustashe underlined the basic idea that the movement wanted to get across: Croatia had a right to independence because the Croats were a distinct ethnolinguistic nation with its own tradition of political statehood. As Holm Sundhaussen succinctly notes, the document expressed the notion that the Croats were 'a God-given, immortal blood community, which conquered its settled areas 1400 years ago' and therefore 'had acquired inalienable territorial rights.'[7] As with other historians, however, Sundhaussen fails to point

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[3] Cited in ibid., 124. The Croatian word *narod* primarily refers to a nation defined by ethnicity and culture in contrast to the Western political concept of nation defined by statehood or citizenship. *Narod* can be translated both as 'people' and 'nation.' See Cipek, *Ideja hrvatske države,* 32–36.

[4] Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret*, 124–125.

[5] Ibid., 125.

[6] Ibid., 128.

[7] Sundhaussen, 'Der Ustascha-Staat', 513.

out that the Ustasha movement was intent on proving the Croats were a separate ethnolinguistic nation, and that is why there are several important references in the Ustasha principles to 'ethnicity', 'blood', 'descent', 'family' and 'foreign settlers.' In 1935 a leading Ustasha by the name of Ante Valenta wrote a text which explained the Ustasha principles in more detail. In relation to principle number eleven, Valenta argued that foreigners in a Croatian state would enjoy 'all rights to life', but they would be excluded from having any influence on 'the fate of Croatia', even if their ancestors had arrived in Croatia many generations ago.[8] Only the descendants of those foreigners who had thoroughly assimilated into the Croatian nation in 'spirit' and 'blood' (i.e. through intermarriage) would be considered native Croats in the future independent Croatian state.[9]

To be sure, the Ustashe did not always follow principle eleven to the letter. Among the five hundred or so recruits of the interwar Ustasha movement there were a small number of individuals who were of non-Croat ethnic descent, including Narcis Jeszensky (Slovak), Josip Metzger (German) and Vlado Singer (Jewish).[10] These Ustashe were quintessential 'exceptions to the rule.' In a book published in 1934, the leading Ustasha writer Mile Budak (1889–1945) referred to the assimilated descendants of foreigners who had loyally displayed Croatian national sentiments as 'only honourable exceptions that confirmed the completely natural rule.'[11] The Ustashe had thus definitely rejected the concept of civic Croatian nationhood found in the ideology of the Croatian Party of Right led by Starčević and his political successor Josip Frank. The ethnolinguistic based nationalism of the Ustashe brought them ideologically closer to the central National Socialist idea that the people or nation stood above the state. Thus, for the Nazis, it was principally the *Volk*, rather than the state, that represented the object of secular devotion. The *Volk* created the state and not the other way around, as the Italian Fascists had argued.[12] The *völkisch* nationalism espoused by the Ustashe was not the product of direct National Socialist influence, but rather, represented a particular national type of the 'East-Central European exclusivist national-tribal (and anti-Semitic) culture-and-soil ideology', so predominant in the political

[8] Cited in Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret,* 396fn, 129.

[9] Ibid.

[10] See the biographies in Darko Stuparić ed. *Tko je Tko u NDH: Hrvatska 1941–1945.* (Zagreb: Minerva, 1997), 172, 268, 359.

[11] Mile Budak, *Hrvatski narod u borbi za samostalnu i nezavisnu hrvatsku državu* (Youngstown, Ohio: Hrvatsko kolo, 1934), 13.

[12] Mosse, *Nazism*, 92–93.

and social life of central, eastern and south-eastern Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[13] Budak expressed this *völkisch* type of nationalism clearly when he made a similar distinction between state and people (which he identified with the 'homeland') in his 1934 essay, 'Some Thoughts on the Organisation of the Free and Independent Croatian State':

> We build the state . . . to correspond to our views and aspirations, our wishes and needs . . . The state consists of all laws, statutes and institutions . . . while the homeland consists of centuries of tradition, memories, events and songs, together with our land, which is filled with the sap and bones of our great-grandfathers, upon which every clot is drenched with the blood of our ancestors, [the land] which will receive our bones and those of our descendants.[14]

Pavelić declared that, in their struggle to free themselves from the artificial Yugoslav state, the Croats faced four principal enemies: 'the Serbian State Government, International Freemasonry, Jewry and Communism.'[15] Pavelić made this claim in his first political memorandum to the German government entitled *Die kroatische Frage,* sent in late 1936.[16] The memorandum tried to enlist National Socialist support for the Ustasha cause by appealing to German revisionist policies of overturning the Versailles Treaty, which, among other things, had facilitated the creation of the Yugoslav state; according to Pavelić, this state had 'inherited the traditional enmity' of the Serbs toward Germany.[17] Naturally, some of the points in the memorandum were exaggerated to curry favour with the National Socialists, but the ideas expressed in Pavelić's document were more or less consistent with other Ustasha ideological texts of the 1930s, and were not simply propaganda intended for German eyes. Pavelić thus sought, first and foremost, to highlight the artificiality of the Yugoslavist idea: 'With the exception of a small part of the intelligentsia, mostly of foreign blood, the Croatian people, above all the Croatian peasantry, determinedly rejected Yugoslavism.'[18] By 'foreign blood', Pavelić had in mind the likes of Gaj and Strossmayer (who, ironically, had both been

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[13] Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 178.

[14] Mile Budak, 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države' (1934) in Bogdan Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. II (Zagreb: Globus, 1983), 367.

[15] Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, 240.

[16] Ibid., 235–245.

[17] Ibid., 243–244.

[18] Ibid., 237.

of German descent). Pavelić further argued that 'the Croats are generally not of Slavic, but of Gothic, descent, an argument that has already been seriously discussed.'[19]

Ustasha Ideology: Croat Ethnic-Racial History

Mile Budak devoted considerable attention to the question of race in Croatian history in his political treatise from 1934 entitled 'The Croatian Nation in the Struggle for a Sovereign and Independent Croatian State.' Budak noted that many of the founders and leading figures of the Illyrian and Yugoslav movements, such as Gaj and Strossmayer, had been the descendants of assimilated foreigners, 'who carried not a single Croatian atom in either their blood or heart.'[20] According to Budak, Strossmayer and his ilk belonged to one of the two main types of racially foreign groups in Croatia: on the one hand, there were the descendants of 'Austrian' (Habsburg) officers and officials 'of various nationalities' who eventually assimilated into the Croatian nation in a cultural sense, even though they did not possess any 'Croatian racial characteristics'; the other group consisted of the Orthodox Serbs who were the descendants of 'various Balkan ethnic refuse', including Tzintzars, Greeks, Armenians, Romanians, Vlachs and Gypsies.[21]

Although the descendants of 'Austrian' settlers had been culturally assimilated, their 'Croatdom' (*hrvatstvo*) was completely different to the national consciousness of the 'true-born Croats of old stock [*koljenovići*]'.[22] As Budak argued, the Croatdom of the Croat of old stock was found in 'his blood, in his bones, in his flesh, in his soul and is tied to the land [and to the] graves of over twenty generations of grandparents and great-grandparents.'[23] The racially foreign Austro-Hungarian group had, however, managed to secure political power and the predominant cultural influence in Croatia during the Habsburg period.[24] Budak concluded that 'the originators, ideologists and bearers of the Illyrian, Yugoslav and Serbo-Croatian movements amongst the Croatian people were [assimilated]

[19] Ibid.
[20] Budak, *Hrvatski narod u borbi za samostalnu i nezavisnu hrvatsku državu*, 5, 12–15, 18.
[21] Ibid., 12, 18, 56.
[22] Ibid., 13.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 12–16.

Croats who did not carry one drop of Croatian blood.'[25] With regard to the Orthodox population in Croatia, Budak stressed that they were actually not the descendants of 'racial Serbs', but a Serbianised mixture of various peoples: '. . . we Croats know very well that nine-tenths of those who are today called Serbs in the Croatian lands do not have one atom of Serbian blood but are a Balkan-Asian potpourri.'[26] In contrast to the 'Serbian Balkan mixture', the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were the 'racially purest, least mixed Croats.'[27] According to Budak, the Muslims had 'somatically preserved all the traits of their Croatian race apart from very rare Asiatic admixtures among those [Bosnians] whose ancestors had served in the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire and married there, and then returned to their homeland Bosnia [with their Asiatic wives].'[28]

Budak remarked that anyone wishing to study the 'racial question' in the Balkans would have to consult Ante Starčević's essay from 1876, 'The Slavoserb Breed in Croatia.'[29] While Budak only had praise for Starčević, who had struggled against Austrian hegemony and Yugoslavism with 'the intensity of his pure Croatian racial strength,' the Ustasha writer was critical of Josip Frank's advocation of a Croat *Realpolitik*, which had tried to enlist Habsburg support for the transformation of the Empire from a dualist Austro-Hungarian entity to one that would include a third autonomous Croatian state in the south.[30] Although Budak stressed that Frank was personally an 'honest man' and loyal to the Croatian national cause, he had nonetheless been unable, as a 'baptised Jew', to faithfully and successfully continue Starčević's political legacy.[31] For Budak, the main reason for Frank's political failure lay in his Jewish heritage: Frank's political realism lay in his blood, for through his veins 'ran the purest blood of a thoroughly practical race.'[32] Frank could not give the Croatian national struggle a 'proper internal, Croatian, racial content', and that is why he had sought the support of the Habsburgs in direct opposition to Starčević's tradition of anti-Austrian politics.[33]

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[25] Ibid., 21.
[26] Ibid., 18, 175.
[27] Ibid., 35.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 56.
[30] Ibid., 5, 66–67.
[31] Ibid., 66.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 67.

Budak had emphasised the question of race in Croatian history, but he had provided no detail on the precise ethnolinguistic and racial origins of the Croats, apart from establishing a distinction between the 'Croatian race' and the 'Balkan-Asiatic' racial element. The task of tracing the precise ethnic-racial origins of the Croatian people was taken up by another Ustasha ideologist, the lawyer and political scientist Mladen Lorković, a leading member of the Ustasha émigré group in Germany. In 1939 *Matica Hrvatska* published Lorković's book, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* ('The People and Land of the Croats'),[34] the most ambitious intellectual undertaking by any interwar Ustasha member. Lorković's book attempted to trace the ethnic history of the historical Croatian lands and the history of ethnic Croat communities on all continents; the book was full of statistical data on the ethnic make-up and population growth of the Croatian regions. Lorković wrote his book partly as a reaction to the establishment of the autonomous Croatian *Banovina* within the Yugoslav state in August 1939. This Croat entity, according to the Ustashe, had unnatural borders as the *Banovina* did not include most of Bosnia and Herzegovina with its majority population of 'Islamic Croats.' As Nada Kisić Kolanović remarks, Lorković's book was, 'by its expansive nationalism, to a large degree, a spiritual production of its time' and also represented a 'political choreography for the creation of the Croatian state' in 1941.[35]

According to Lorković, the territorial patrimony of the Croatian nation included the core territories of the pre-1918 Triune Kingdom as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. Istria was claimed as Croatian ethnic, but not historic, territory, as was the Muslim Slav populated region of south-west Serbia known as the Sandžak; the Muslims there were claimed as Croats due to their close cultural and ethnic links to the Bosnian Muslims.[36] Lorković also argued that the Croats had greatly contributed to the ethnic make-up and medieval history of the Slovenes and Montenegrins; the land of the latter was once known as 'Red Croatia' (*Crvena Hrvatska*).[37]

Lorković sought to convince his readers of the antiquity and greatness of the Croatian nation, namely, the fact that the 'Croatian national and state name' was 'one of the most ancient and honourable among the nations

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[34] See the newest reprint, Mladen Lorković, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata* (1939; Split: Marjan tisak, 2005).

[35] Kisić Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković,* 30.

[36] Lorković, *Narod i zemlja Hrvata*, 162–166, 198.

[37] Ibid., 22–32.

of Europe.'[38] Croatian history could not be interpreted through the 'prism of pure Slavism'—which held that the Croats had started to evolve as a separate people out of the 'non-descript Slavic masses' only from the late eighth century AD—because the 'genesis' of the Croat nation was found to be much older and more complex than once thought.[39] On the basis of the theories of scholars such as Hauptmann and Sakač, Lorković located the 'first Croatia' (*prva Hrvatska*) between the Caucasus Mountains and Russian lowlands, which was, from the second to fourth centuries AD, the proto-homeland of the Iranian Croats; the 'second Croatia' (*druga Hrvatska*) was the later state of White Croatia in southern Poland, and the 'third Croatia' (*treća Hrvatska*) was the present day 'Adriatic Croatia.'[40] The Iranian theory of Croatian origins, Lorković stated, had the strongest arguments in its favour, so much so that there could no longer be any real disagreement on the origin of the Croats: the ethnic name 'Croat' (from Iranian 'Hu-urvatha'), the political title of 'Ban', Old Croatian art, and many non-Slavic words and names in the Croatian language all pointed to the fact that 'the entire old Croatian history is only comprehensible by the hypothesis that the ruling Croats were the non-Slavic layer which covered and organised the Slavic masses.'[41] Lorković was thus strongly in favour of the theory that postulated the proto-Croats were 'a tribe of Iranian-Caucasian race', which became the 'warrior nation' that organised the Slavs in White Croatia (as well as later along the Adriatic after defeating the Avars).[42] This Iranian-Caucasian military and political ruling class intermarried with its more numerous Slav subjects, and this led to the linguistic Slavicisation of the Iranian Croats.[43] On the other hand, as Sakač had argued, Iranian-Croat blood transformed the subject Slavs into a state-building people.[44]

Once the Slavicised Iranian Croats reached the Adriatic they subsequently intermarried with the remnants of the Slavs, Romanised Illyrians and Celts, Avars and Goths left in the former provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia after the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the subsequent defeat of the Avars at the hands of the Croats. Consequently, the Croats (especially in the southern areas along the Adriatic) received a 'strong

[38] Ibid., 35.
[39] Ibid., 7.
[40] Ibid., 15–16.
[41] Ibid., 35–36.
[42] Ibid., 17, 35.
[43] Ibid., 35–36.
[44] Ibid., 16.

Illyrian-Celtic blood admixture.'[45] According to Lorković, the Illyrians and Celts had represented the second and third 'waves' of migration of racially 'Aryan' peoples to present day Croatian territory (the Thracians had constituted the first wave of migration of an Aryan people to the Balkans, which began in the early Bronze Age).[46] During the early and late Stone Age, Dalmatia and Pannonia had been inhabited by non-Aryan races; Lorković noted that these races were probably of 'Old [pre-]European-Near Eastern' origin.[47] As regards the ethnic contributions of the Goths, Lorković remarked that the majority of historians and philologists had rejected the Gothic theory of proto-Croatian origins; but the proponents of that theory had also been the first to draw attention to the non-Slav origin of the proto-Croatian ruling caste and to the evidence of numerous Gothic-Croatian ethnic links, especially in Bosnia.[48]

Turning to the question of the Orthodox Serbian minority in Croatia, Lorković argued that these Orthodox Christians were actually the descendants of three main groups: 1) nomadic Orthodox immigrants of Vlach origin, who had arrived in Croatian lands serving as irregular troops in Ottoman armies; 2) ethnic Serbs who had arrived in northeast Croatia during the so-called great migrations of ethnic Serbs in the late seventeenth century; and 3) Catholic Croats who had been pressured to convert to Orthodoxy during the seventeenth century under the Ottomans, who favoured the Orthodox over the Catholic Church.[49] The only factor that held these disparate groups together was their Serbian Orthodox faith, and it was this faith that was to provide the subsequent basis for a Serbian national identity.

The Serb-Vlachs were the descendants, Lorković explained, of one of the two social layers of 'Romans' (*Romani*) that had remained in Dalmatia after the arrival of the Slavicised Iranian Croats in the early Middle Ages.[50] The first, 'socially privileged', Roman group consisted of the urban Romans in the Dalmatian cities, while the second, 'socially degraded', group were the pastoral, nomadic Vlachs.[51] While the Roman Dalmatian towns had been thoroughly Croatised during the late Middle Ages, assimilation in the case of the Vlachs was only partially successful. Many Catholic Vlachs,

[45] Ibid., 36–38.
[46] Ibid., 17.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 38fn 36, 37.
[49] Ibid., 68–72.
[50] Ibid., 37.
[51] Ibid., 41.

mainly in Lika and the Dalmatian hinterland, had been thoroughly Croatised through linguistic assimilation and intermarriage with Croats. The assimilation of this Vlach blood led to a considerable change in the racial composition of part of the Croatian people. Lorković cited Šufflay's argument regarding this question: the Vlach ('Illyrian-Thracian') blood formed the main component of 'the violent Dinaric type among Albanians, southern Serbs and southern Croats.'[52] Lorković argued, however, that the numerical size of the assimilated Vlach population had not represented a threat to the unity and main ethnic character of the Croatian lands. In contrast, the migration of larger numbers of nomadic Orthodox Vlachs of 'Slavic-Romanic-Albanian' origin from Montenegro to the depopulated Croat regions, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thoroughly transformed the ethnic character of much of 'historic' Croatia.[53]

According to Lorković, the noble culture of chivalry and honour, common to both Catholic and Muslim Croats, was not shared by the mercenary and criminal Vlach pastoral settlers, who had fought, first for the Ottoman, and then later, for the Habsburg Empire. Lorković noted that the sessions of the Croatian *Sabor* in the sixteenth century were full of accusations against the Vlach Ottoman auxiliaries or *martolosi*, who were responsible for plundering raids, the burning of homes and the abduction of people for Ottoman slave markets.[54] In 1586 the *Sabor* duly passed a resolution whereby every captured *martolos* was to be impaled as an example to the others. Significantly, no such decisions were ever taken by the *Sabor* against the Islamic Croats.[55]

Lorković's work stressed the important place of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims in the ethnic history and identity of the Croats. He called for their past to be treated as an integral part of the history of the Croatian people.[56] The Muslims were the descendants of the Bogomil nobility that converted to Islam in order to preserve its lands and privileges. Lorković noted with pride the influence and power that Islamic Croats had wielded in Constantinople as janissaries and Ottoman officials during the sixteenth century, when the Croatian language was regarded as a second official language at the Ottoman court.[57] Just as the Catholic

[52] Ibid., 42.
[53] Ibid., 42, 68.
[54] Ibid., 69.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 47–48.
[57] Ibid., 45.

Croats had been the 'bulwark of Christianity', the Islamic Croats were the historical vanguard of Islam in Europe; furthermore, as the westernmost branch of Islam, the Islamic Croats were in, many respects, the most culturally advanced branch of the Islamic world.[58] Lorković concluded that the bloody religious-imperial wars that pitted Christian and Muslim Croats against each other from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries had proven that the Croats were 'a strong enough race', since 'a people of weak blood, of a hybrid breed, of a small land and tiny numbers could not have given evidence of that vital force and real greatness which the Croats of both faiths gave, fighting on two sides of the world barricade.'[59]

Apart from the Balkan-Vlach-Asiatic Serbs, the Ustashe also identified the Jews of Croatia as a foreign racial minority. Next to the Balkan Serb-Vlach of nomadic origin, the equally 'nomadic', rootless, cosmopolitan and mercantile Jew provided another visible 'counter-type' to the ideal type of the noble Croat *koljenović*. In general, counter-types were vital for racialist political movements because it was 'through the counter-image', as the National Socialists argued, that 'we obtain the greatest clarity of what our own ideals should be.'[60] Before long, the Ustashe would begin to merge their stereotypes of Serb-Vlachs and Jews together, while, during the period of the NDH, these stereotypes would be moulded into the general counter-type of the 'Bolshevik-Asiatic' Other (which would also include the very small number of Gypsies in Croatia).

The Jews provided the main counter-type for race-based nationalist movements in Europe because they were (alongside Gypsies) the most conspicuous ethnic-racial minority living on the European continent. As George Mosse remarked, 'Jews were the only sizeable minority living in Europe who, before emancipation—and in eastern Europe until much later—dressed differently, spoke a different language . . . and whose religious practices seemed chaotic and mysterious.'[61] In Croatia, the urban Jews, the dark-skinned Gypsies and Orthodox Serb-Vlachs were the most obvious 'counter-types' to the ideal European-Aryan Croats. The Jews in Croatia had already been defined as a racially foreign element by Stjepan and Antun Radić, Ćiro Truhelka, who had described the Jews as a sterile *Dauerrasse*, and by Filip Lukas, who had noted that the central European

[58] Ibid., 45–48.
[59] Ibid., 48.
[60] Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, 49.
[61] Ibid., 63.

Jews were racially distinct from Germans (and other nations) regardless of their predominant German language.

The racial opposition between the Jew and Croat made its appearance in Ustasha ideological literature from an early date. For Mile Budak, the Jews were clearly a racial, and not simply a religious, group. In his 1934 essay on the organisation of an independent Croat state, Budak associated both capitalism and communism—two political ideologies that he rejected as alien to the Croatian peasant way of life—with the 'Jewish race.' According to Budak, the leaders of both communism and capitalism belonged, racially speaking, to the same group:

> They are not, to be sure, the same people, but the blood is the same, the same descent, the same race, which has its aspirations and aims . . . according to the decrees of their blood, which has led and directed them throughout the centuries . . . The only difference is that some Rockefeller or Stern is replaced by some Trotsky, who was called Bronstein before, and now continues to work the same as before, only under a new firm.[62]

To be sure, Budak and other Ustashe sometimes made a distinction between the 'honourable' Jews who identified as Croats and with the Croatian national cause on the one hand, and the Jews who were 'usurers, profiteers and exploiters' and allies of the Serbian regime on the other.[63] The Ustasha movement included a few sworn members who were of Jewish origin.[64] During the early twentieth century Croatian nationalism had attracted its fair share of assimilated Jews (most notably Josip Frank). These Croatian Jewish nationalists had, however, adhered to a civic concept of nationhood that stood in opposition to Ustasha ethnonationalism. Although the Ustashe were, in contrast to the Nazis, certainly capable of making a distinction between a few assimilated Croat Jews on the one hand and foreign or 'traitorous' Jews on the other, they nonetheless regarded Jewry as a whole to be a racially foreign element in the Croatian national body. The Ustashe would continue to make a sort of distinction between 'good' and 'bad' Jews in the NDH by offering a very small number of 'good' Croatian Jews (mostly those related by marriage to Aryan Croats) the legal status of Aryan citizens.

Ustasha anti-Semitism was closely linked to the movement's anti-communism, for communism was identified with international Jewry. Since

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62 Budak, 'Nekoliko misli o uređenju slobodne i nezavisne hrvatske države', 368.
63 Ante Moškov, *Pavelićevo doba*, Petar Požar ed. (Split: Laus, 1999), 206.
64 Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 619–625.

the Ustashe would also associate communism with Yugoslavism, the 'Marxist' Jews could also be viewed as supporters of the Yugoslav state. In 1938 Pavelić outlined in detail (in his fluent Italian) the Ustasha stance on communism in a short book entitled *Orrori e Errori* ('Horrors and Errors').[65] For Pavelić, Soviet communism was a criminal system that negated the natural order of life—it was opposed to family, religion, private property and the nation. The family, 'the oldest and most natural human society', was an obstacle to Bolshevism's attempt to 'negate the worth and importance of blood ties, for the blood tie is a negation of internationalism and non-nationhood.'[66] The family was a barrier to the uncontrolled power of the Soviet state, which wanted to reduce man to a 'simple number', without any ties to family. The same Bolshevik desire to reduce man to purely material matter was also reflected in communism's war against religion and spirituality altogether.[67]

Communist materialism and internationalism was easily understood if one traced the racial origins of the 'great majority of the intellectuals and followers of Marx.' These intellectuals belonged to the Jewish race, including Karl Marx himself, whom Pavelić defined as a 'Semite-Easterner', a descendant of the East, the home of the 'bizarre and exotic, fantastic dreams of promised lands, rivers of life, phoenix birds and nirvana, classical and hyperbolic spectacles of Prophets and Messiahs.'[68] In Pavelić's eyes, the tragedy of Bolshevism lay in the Jewish appropriation of leadership of the working and peasant classes. The Jews were 'a race that for two millennia were never workers, soldiers or peasants', but merchants and speculators, who now saw themselves as 'the representatives of workers, soldiers and peasants.'[69] There was a conviction on Pavelić's part that the racial state of National Socialist Germany, 'which had shaken off the infections of Bolshevik racial promiscuity' would soon 'crush the head' of communism.[70] Only Fascism and National Socialism, Pavelić argued, were up to this challenge, since the liberal democracies such as Britain and France

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[65] The book was published in Croatian in 1941 under the title *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu.*

[66] Ante Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svietu* (1941; Madrid: Domovina, 1974), 81–82.

[67] Ibid., 91–97.

[68] Ibid., 16–17.

[69] Ibid., 115.

[70] See the newest edition, Ante Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda: Komunizam i boljševizam u Rusiji i u svijetu* (Zagreb: Croatiaprojekt, 2000), 254. The section on 'Fascism and Bolshevism' was omitted from the 1974 edition.

were simply incapable of combatting the Bolshevik-Asiatic threat to European civilisation.

Pavelić believed that France in particular suffered from a weakening of the national consciousness, and this was largely the result of accepting non-white migrants from French colonial possessions in Africa.[71] The penetration of racially foreign blood into France was therefore destroying 'the national resistance against internationalism and against Bolshevism, for with the dilution of blood comes the dilution of tradition and the characteristics of the race, and so there begins not only the physical but also the spiritual deformation of the individual and the nation.'[72] Pavelić asked, in the case of non-white immigrants in France: 'From where does the national consciousness come in the blood which, in whole or in part, derives from the veins of a type that never possessed that consciousness . . . and from where does the love toward the achievements of culture come in those whose grandfathers ate human flesh and who always lived in barbarity . . .?'[73] Pavelić further noted that the negative effects of racial mixing were best observed in the socially chaotic and politically anarchic way of life that characterised the racially mixed societies of Central America.[74]

Conclusion

By the end of the 1930s the Ustasha movement had managed to formulate a coherent ideology of Croatian ethnolinguistic and racial individuality. In essence, Ustasha racial ideology rested on the notion of what Miroslav Krleža had termed 'a racial, blue-blooded isolation' of the Croats in comparison to the Serbs and other Balkan peoples. Krleža had failed, however, to identify the true historical context for the development of the Croatian anti-Yugoslavist notion of 'racial blue-blood.' Ustasha ethnonationalist and racialist ideas were not the ideological product of a direct imitation of German National Socialist racial ideology, but the product of interwar Croat ethnolinguistic/racial anti-Yugoslavism, which itself emerged from a long intellectual-ideological discourse involving the dialectic of competing Croatian, Serbian and Yugoslavist racial ideas. More specifically,

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71 Pavelić, *Strahote zabluda* (1974 edition), 192.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 193.

Ustasha ideas on race formed, together with conservative anti-Yugoslavist race theory, part of 'a wider nationalist consensus by 1941.'[75]

Ustasha racial ideology cannot, therefore, be analysed outside of the context of the political, social and cultural life of interwar Yugoslavia, a state in which 'questions of race and nationality dominated the political agenda.'[76] German racial anthropology and National Socialist race theories did exert an intellectual and ideological influence on Ustasha racial ideology but only insofar as German/National Socialist racial ideas had a strong influence on racial thought throughout central, eastern and south-eastern Europe: to cite just one example, in 1935 the Orthodox episcope of Žič in Serbia, Nikolaj Velimirović, sent his 'respects' to the 'German leader', claiming that 'we are the children of God, people of Aryan race, to whom fate has assigned the honorary role to be the main bearer of Christianity in the world.'[77] Interwar Ustasha ethnolinguistic-racial ideology defined the Croats by the criteria of 'blood and descent.' It further defined the original bearers of the Croatian ethnic name as a Slavicised Iranian warrior caste which, in the early Middle Ages, had formed a people from the blending of several Indo-European or Aryan peoples, including Slavs, Goths, Illyrians and Celts. The Croats of old stock (*koljenovići*) were said to be descended from the original medieval people. The alien racial minorities in Croatia comprised the Balkan-Asiatic Serbo-Vlachs and the foreign ethnic-racial remnants of Habsburg rule, particularly the Jews.

Although the Ustashe established a clear ethnolinguistic, and Aryan racial, identity for the Croats, the precise ethnic-racial position of the Orthodox Serbian minority of historic Croatia posed a slight ideological problem for the Ustashe. The Orthodox population was clearly perceived to form a unique ethnoreligious group of mixed ethnic-racial origin that was distinct from the majority ethnic Croats. The Orthodox 'Serb-Vlachs' possessed a national Serbian consciousness as a result of their Serbian Orthodox faith, but they were only partially of Serbian-Slavic ethnic descent. Furthermore, a large number of Orthodox Christians in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were also considered to be the descendants of Croats who had converted to Orthodoxy. The Vlach element was defined as forming the strongest ethnic component of the Orthodox minority in Croatia, but Lorković (like Šufflay before him) argued that a sizeable

[75] Yeomans, 'Of "Yugoslav Barbarians" ' 117.
[76] Ibid., 83.
[77] Cited in Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 62.

number of Croats (i.e. of Dinaric type) were also of partial Vlach origin; Lorković had further derived the origins of the Croatian Vlachs from the Romanised Illyrians and Celts, two peoples he had defined as racially Aryan. Thus, while a clear ethnolinguistic difference was said to exist between Croats and the Serb-Vlach minority, there also existed some uncertainty among the Ustashe as to whether there was a deeper racial (i.e. anthropological-biological) distinction between the two peoples. During the NDH, the general tendency among Ustasha ideologists and intellectuals (including Lorković himself) was to argue that such a distinction was indeed of a racial nature.

In any case, in his book from 1939, Lorković had stressed the nomadic character of the large mass of Balkan 'Slavic-Romanic-Albanian' Vlachs (who formed the largest part of the Orthodox population in Croatia), and nomadism was defined by most European race theorists as one of the main racial-social-cultural traits that, in general, set Asiatic or Turanian races apart from Aryan peoples. Among others, Hans Günther and the National Socialist ideologist Walther Darré (1895–1953) 'rejected the idea that the Nordic race should be seen solely as marauding [nomadic] invader, arguing that the history of the Nordic race showed the qualities both of peaceful agricultural settlement and of warlike heroism.'[78] Nomadism was thus restricted to non-Aryan peoples such as the Jews and Gypsies. Lorković, for his part, had also noted that the earliest inhabitants of the Balkans had belonged to pre-Aryan Near Eastern races and this ties in with the earlier theories of Truhelka and Pilar, which had derived the origins of the Serb-Vlachs from a dark-skinned, pre-Aryan, Balkan-Asiatic racial type.

This chapter has underlined how misleading it is to define Ustasha ethnic-racial ideas as a negative ideology based on straightforward anti-Serbianism and without 'a coherent elaboration of the Croatian national identity' (Srdja Trifković).[79] The Ustashe were ideologically motivated, first and foremost, by anti-Yugoslavism, as they aimed to eradicate the Yugoslav idea and provide the Croats with a clear ethnolinguistic and racial identity of their own. James Sadkovich, for his part, also provides a distorted picture of Ustasha racial ideology when he claims that 'early Ustaša racism was therefore cultural, not biological, and more akin to Fascist italianità than the more virulent Nazi aryanism. Race was a matter of

[78] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 105.

[79] Trifković also claims that the Ustasha movement was an 'anti-Serb and anti-Yugoslav fit of rage.' Srdjan Trifković, 'Yugoslavia in Crisis: Europe and the Croat Question, 1939–41', *European History Quarterly*, 23 (1993): 531.

cultural identity and residence: according to Budak, to qualify as a Croat, one needed several generations of "graves." '[80] Actually, the earlier examination of Budak's racial ideas in this chapter highlights the fact that he placed great stress on racial ancestry (i.e. 'graves') as a marker of Croat identity, for otherwise he would have not considered Josip Frank a racial foreigner.

Interwar Ustasha racialism was both biological and cultural (or spiritual) in nature, as was the case with National Socialist race theory. As Aaron Gillette explains, spiritual racism was 'based on an appeal to intuition, myth, historical analysis, and a variety of irrational philosophies' and it 'generally emphasized the primacy of the racial "spirit" over the physical aspects of race.'[81] According to Ustasha racial ideology, the Croats had biologically inherited the Aryan martial qualities of their warrior ancestors: they were, as Kerubin Šegvić wrote, a heroic *Herrenvolk* (meaning a 'nation of masters' and not 'master race'; see p. 118). This idea corresponded to German race theories which considered the Nordics to be a heroic warrior race (*Kriegerrasse*).[82] Sadkovich also notes that 'rather than a race of cultured cosmopolitans, the Croats were presented by Ustaša propaganda as a "warrior people", renowned not because of the sharpness of their intellect, but for their prowess with a sword.'[83] To be more accurate, the Ustashe regarded the Croats as a cultured warrior people.

[80] Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, 151.
[81] Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 188.
[82] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 104.
[83] Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism*, 154.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE USTASHA RACIAL STATE

Introduction

The German invasion of Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941 paved the way for the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. The NDH was proclaimed in Zagreb on 10 April 1941 in the name of Ante Pavelić, and by 'the will of our ally' (i.e. Germany), by the unofficial head of the homeland Ustasha organisation, the former Austro-Hungarian Colonel Slavko Kvaternik (1878–1947).[1] Pavelić returned to Croatia on April 13 after twelve years in exile in Italy. The next day he informed a group of Italian journalists the following:

> Today's restoration of Croatian independence has its foundation in historical and ethnic factors. The pan-Slavist movement spread throughout the entire world the belief that we are one people with the Serbs. This is not true as the Croats are not Slavs according to race but rather are Croats by their origin and nothing else. Without repeating the known differences in religion and culture, the two nations are differentiated ethnically even in a somatic sense.[2]

On 15 April Pavelić reached Zagreb and immediately formed a new government that he officially headed as the Poglavnik. The German Reich and Fascist Italy formally recognised the NDH on the same day. The NDH was never truly independent, but one cannot ignore the fact that 'a political entity calling itself the Independent State of Croatia did exist from April 10, 1941 to May 8, 1945.'[3] The NDH retained all the formal trappings of a state until its fall in May 1945, including its own foreign office, currency, police and armed forces (albeit under German operational command), education system and significant control over policies toward ethnic-racial minorities.

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[1] For more on the events of April 1941 in Croatia, see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*, 52–53.

[2] Cited in Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, 140.

[3] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*, 272.

The NDH included within its state territory the regions of Croatia-Slavonia, southern Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Rome Agreements, signed by Mussolini and Pavelić on 18 May 1941, accorded Italy sovereignty over the littoral and hinterland of northern and central Dalmatia and most of the Adriatic islands.[4] After the capitulation of Italy in September 1943 Germany recognised the NDH's sovereignty over the formerly Italian-annexed areas. Hungary occupied the small northwestern region of Međimurje, and ruled it until the end of the war, although the Ustasha government never officially recognised the Hungarian annexation. In late June 1941 the large ethnic German minority in north-eastern Croatia (*Volksdeutsche*) also received complete cultural and political autonomy within the NDH, including education in their own schools and self-government in areas where they formed the majority.[5] The NDH had a population of approximately 6.5 million inhabitants: 30% were comprised of Orthodox Serbs (around 1,845,000 people); there were also around 150,000 ethnic Germans, between 36,000 to 39,000 Jews and just over 750,000 Bosnian Muslims.[6] Ethnic Croats made up a little over half of the population of the NDH, but since all Bosnian Muslims were declared ethnically Croatian, the number of Croats was officially estimated at around 4.5 million people.

The National Community

In order to transform the multi-ethnic NDH into an ethnically homogeneous nation state the Ustashe established extralegal forces which were free to deal, in whatever manner seemed fit, with the political and racial enemies of the Croatian people. On 17 April 1941 Pavelić issued the Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and State, which authorised the death sentence for 'whoever in whatever way acts or has acted against the honour and vital interests of the Croatian people or in any way endangers the existence of the Independent State of Croatia or state authority, even if the act is only attempted . . .'[7] Like the German Reich, the NDH did not

[4] For more on the Rome Agreements, see Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 101–104.

[5] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 283.

[6] The figures for the population of the NDH and its ethnic composition were deduced on the basis of population statistics from 1931; different authors give somewhat different figures. See Jere Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike 1895–1945* (1960; reprint Zagreb; Institut za suvremenu povijest, 1995), 87–88 and Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 106. On the number of Serbs, see Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, 113, 161, and Jews, Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 592.

[7] Cited in Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*, 383.

possess a constitution. Its legal system was built upon the Ustasha principles, as well as upon a succession of decrees issued by the Poglavnik and other decrees of a constitutional-legal nature.[8] According to the NDH's leading legal theorist, Eugen Sladović (1882–1960), the Ustasha state was founded upon the principal ideas of nationalism and patriotism, solidarity, the social obligation of work, socially tied private property and estate corporatism.[9] In both an ideological and legal sense, the NDH was constructed as the state of the Croatian 'national community' (*narodna zajednica*), which directly corresponded to the National Socialist idea of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. In late 1941 Pavelić explained the significance of the national community:

> Today, when we, the Croatian people, have come to [accept] new ideas, and rejected individualistic and democratic ideas, the whole people become one family, what the Germans today call: the Volksgemeinschaft. Individuals . . . cease to be of worth, except as members of the national community.[10]

In a speech held in Zagreb, in late May 1942, Mile Budak (at that time Croatian ambassador in Berlin) claimed that the predominantly peasant Croats were naturally well disposed toward authoritarian rule due to their 'ethnopsychology.'[11] Budak compared the relationship between the Poglavnik and his people with the relationship between the grandfather of patriarchal peasant society and his commune (*zadruga*): the peasant Croatian people 'draws consciously and unconsciously upon the memories and traditions of the great domestic communes, in which the grandfather governed wisely—authority without objection and appeal.'[12] Pavelić indeed wielded the absolute authority of a patriarch in the racial 'commune' that constituted the ideal Ustasha state. In an article published in the United States in 1942 Dinko Tomašić wrote that 'the *Ustaša* state is conceived as an enlarged family of the patriarchal type in which the whole authority is vested in the hands of the patriarch and in which all members are supposed to work under his direction for the benefit of the whole.'[13]

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[8] Eugen Sladović, 'Ustavni temelji hrvatske države', *Spremnost,* 26 April 1942, 2. Also see Matković, *Povijest NDH*, 67 and Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 76–77.

[9] Eugen Sladović, 'Družtvovno-politički sustav Hrvatske', *Spremnost,* 3 May 1942, 2.

[10] Cited in Aleksandar Seitz, *Put do hrvatskog socializma* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1943), 45.

[11] Cited in Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 58.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Dinko Tomašić, 'Croatia in European Politics', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 2 (1942–1943): 80.

The patriarchal national community was best protected, as the Ustasha ideologist Aleksandar Seitz (1912–1981) argued in 1943, within the ideological and organisational framework of 'Croatian socialism', or 'social nationalism', which was opposite to the socialism propagated by international Bolshevism.[14] The aim of Croatian socialism was to harmonise and bring together all classes and estates to work for the greater good of the national community. The term 'national community' was a concept alien to both Marxists and capitalists, because the former spoke only of classes, while the latter only recognised free markets.[15] The notion of the 'national community' was a recent one devised by Adolf Hitler. The nation, which constituted a 'group of people tied together through consciousness of a common affiliation on the basis of a common origin', had historically been divided into mutually hostile estates and classes. The goal of a true nationalism (based on the national community) was to unite these opposing classes into a harmonious entity.[16]

Croatian social nationalism was a component part of the European 'revolution' that was opposed to both 'Americanism' and Bolshevism, two ideologies that desired the 'levelling' of all human cultures. The European identity, in contrast, was founded on 'unity in diversity.'[17] The European identity was also based on the idea of natural inequality. On 25 February 1942 the first Minister of Justice of the NDH, Mirko Puk (1884–1945), told the Croatian *Sabor* that 'the authoritarian state rejects the past legal theories, [whereby] all people are already equal according to their own nature, but [instead] accepts the other principle of differentiation and selection of mankind . . .'[18] The authoritarian state the Ustasha movement sought to establish rested on the 'principle of one leader, one nation and one state.'[19] According to the Ustashe, the Jews had invented the democratic notion of natural equality. As the anti-Semitic intellectual Vladimir Cicak argued in the 'Ustasha Annual' for 1943, the Jews, who were 'members of a lower race', had

> . . . abused the Christian tenet of the equality of all people before God, hence in the transcendental order, and had begun to seek the equality of all people in individual states and among individual nations, hence in the

[14] Seitz, *Put do hrvatskog socializma*, 38–39.
[15] Ibid., 32.
[16] Ibid., 180–182.
[17] Ibid., 29.
[18] 'Probitak zajednice kao vrhovni zakon', *Hrvatski narod*, 26 February 1942, 1.
[19] Ibid.

natural order, even if all living nature was the best proof that such equality does not and cannot exist in the natural order.[20]

The Race Laws

Minister Puk informed Zagreb's *Novi list* ('New Paper') on 29 April 1941 that Croatia's 'best lawyers and biologists' had been working to draft the 'Law on Jews', adopting as a 'basis or framework' the German Nuremberg laws.[21] The principles of 'selection' and 'differentiation' were duly expressed in legal form in the Law Decree on Citizenship promulgated on 30 April 1941. The decree distinguished between a 'citizen' (*državljanin*) and a 'state national' (*državni pripadnik*): a state national was 'a person who stands under the protection of the Independent State of Croatia', while a citizen was a 'state national of Aryan origin who by his actions has demonstrated that he did not work against the liberation aspirations of the Croatian people and who is willing to readily and faithfully serve the Croatian people and the Independent State of Croatia.' Only the citizen was considered 'the bearer of political rights according to the decrees of the law.'[22] As Jozo Tomasevich pointed out, 'with this formulation not only Jews, Serbs, and Gypsies, but also Croats who did not agree with the Ustashas could, by administrative fiat, be denied Croatian citizenship.'[23]

The concept of Aryan racial identity was legally enshrined in two racial decrees also issued on 30 April: the Law Decree on Racial Affiliation and the Law Decree on the Protection of the Aryan Blood and Honour of the Croatian People.[24] According to the first decree, an individual of Aryan descent (*arijsko porijetlo*) was one 'who descends from ancestors, who are members of the European racial community or who descends from ancestors of that community outside of Europe.'[25] A Croat could prove his/her Aryan descent through the birth and marriage certificates of his/her ancestors in the first and second generations (parents and grandparents), while members of the Islamic religious community who were unable to

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[20] Vladimir Cicak, 'Europa u borbi proti boljševizma', *Ustaški godišnjak 1943* (Zagreb: Nakladna knjižara "Velebit", 1943), 213–214.

[21] 'Uspomene ministra dra. M. Puka iz borbe za Hrvatsku državu prije 20 godina', *Novi list*, 30 April 1941, 5.

[22] 'Zakonska odredba o državljanstvu', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 May 1941, 2.

[23] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 384.

[24] 'Krv i čast hrvatskog naroda zaštićeni posebnim odredbama', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 May 1941, 1.

[25] Ibid.

provide the necessary documents had to present written testimony of two credible witnesses who had known their ancestors (parents and grandparents) and could verify that there were no 'individuals of non-Aryan descent' among them. The second law decree on the protection of Aryan blood and honour banned marriages between Aryans and racial Jews (and with other individuals of non-Aryan descent).[26]

The first decree also specified who was legally defined as a Jew. Persons were Jews by race if they had at least three Jewish grandparents; a grandparent was defined as a Jew/Jewess if he/she belonged to the 'Mosaic faith.'[27] Persons with one Jewish grandparent (quarter-Jews) were able to legally acquire Croatian citizenship, while individuals with two Jewish grandparents (half-Jews) could also attain Aryan legal status. A half-Jew was defined as non-Aryan if he/she: a) was a member of the 'Mosaic faith' on or after 10 April 1941; b) was married to a full or three-quarter Jew; c) had married an individual with two or more Jewish grandparents after the promulgation of the racial decrees, or was a descendant of such a marriage; d) was the illegitimate offspring of a full or three-quarter Jew and was born after 31 January 1942; or e) was classified a Jew/Jewess by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the recommendation of the Racial-Political Committee (*Rasno-političko povjerenstvo*). Jews and half-Jews born outside of Croatia to parents who did not originate from the NDH's territory were also classified as non-Aryans, as were the illegitimate children born of a full or three-quarter Jewess and individuals marrying Jews after 30 April 1941 in contravention of the racial law decree.[28] The first racial decree also defined the Gypsy as an individual who had two or more grandparents who were Gypsies by race.[29] The sixth article of the first decree further gave the Head of State (i.e. the Poglavnik) the right to grant all political rights that belong to individuals of Aryan descent to non-Aryan individuals (together with their spouses and children) who had proven themselves 'meritorious for the Croatian people, especially for its liberation' before 10 April 1941.[30] Accordingly, a small minority of Jews attained the legal status of 'honorary Aryans' in the NDH.

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[26] Ibid. For a partial English translation of the Ustasha race laws, see Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1961), 454.

[27] 'Krv i čast hrvatskog naroda zaštićeni posebnim odredbama.'

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

On 3 May 1941, an anonymous article—most probably penned by Boris Zarnik—appeared in the main Ustasha daily *Hrvatski narod* ('The Croatian People') entitled 'Interpretation of the Racial Law Decrees.' The article declared that the NDH 'is a national state and only Aryans have the right to occupy responsible positions in it and direct its fate.'[31] A nation, the article stated, was 'a group of people with a common tradition, common spiritual goods and the will for the common advancement of those goods', while a race was 'a group of people who correspond in essential hereditary characteristics.' The nation also possessed its own spirit and 'spirituality has its source in the psyche of the individual, which is to a large degree the expression of his hereditary spiritual characteristics.' Accordingly, the 'spiritual essence of the nation is therefore mainly a function of its racial structure.' A nation that wished 'to preserve its national individuality cannot grant to individuals foreign by race the same rights that it gives to individuals who are of the same origin and racial structure.' Consequently, an Aryan nation could only assimilate foreigners who belonged to another Aryan people.[32]

Two racial minorities were identified as being essentially distinct from the Croatian people in terms of their 'racial components': the Jews and the Gypsies. The Jews were not defined by their 'Mosaic faith' but according to their 'racial structure and biological heritage.'[33] The article claimed that the racial decrees were not based on the idea of racism, according to which one race was superior to another and, therefore, the decrees were not in conflict with the teachings of Catholicism, which was 'one of the foundations of Croatian spiritual culture.' Every race was equal in the sense that each one had biologically adapted to its own particular environment. The author of the article noted that there was not a trace of 'Nordic racism' in the German race laws, but laws were needed to prevent a foreign racial minority, such as the Jewish race in the German Reich, arrogating for itself 'leadership in the [German] culture and economy.' It was the Jews who propagated 'real racism', since their 'religious books' defined the Jews as God's chosen people. The NDH's race laws were justified as 'only an expression of the aspiration that the Croatian state, its fate and spiritual and economic culture be administered in the national spirit and for the exclusive welfare of the Croatian people.'[34]

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[31] 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi', *Hrvatski narod*, 3 May 1941, 7.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.

Although the NDH's race laws were 'prepared according to the German law decrees' (i.e. the Nuremberg laws), the German government employed the term *deutsches oder artverwandtes Blut* ('German or kindred blood'), while the Croatian government used the term *arijsko porijetlo* ('Aryan descent'), because 'blood in a biological sense actually has no connection with heredity at all.'[35] There was no such thing as a separate Croatian race, since 'the Croats, as all European nations in general, are a mixture of the Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Baltic and Mediterranean races with small admixtures of other races.' The European racial community was defined as 'a group of those races that have for centuries been mixing with one another in Europe: Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Baltic and Mediterranean.' On the other hand, the Jews and Gypsies had, throughout history, remained outside the European community because of Jewish 'religious and racial exclusivity' and the low Gypsy 'social position.' The Jewish racial structure consisted of the 'Oriental and Near Eastern races with admixtures of the Mongol and black races', while the Gypsies were 'a mixture of the Indic and Iranian races with paleo-Negroid elements [and] with Oriental and Mongoloid admixtures'; both the Jews and Gypsies possessed, however, a 20% admixture of the European racial community. This 20% European racial admixture thus provided article six of the first racial decree with a biological justification of sorts because it was apparently possible that an individual Jew, who had proved his worth in the struggle for Croatian independence, might actually posses, through a chance combination of genes, a more dominant European racial strain; in any case, the article in *Hrvatski narod* noted that only in the 'most exceptional cases' would a Jew be granted the legal status of an Aryan.[36]

According to an article in *Novi list*, from 3 May, the racial law decrees were of the 'greatest importance' for the future of the NDH.[37] The Croats had to 'protect their blood from Jewish, Gypsy and non-Aryan admixtures in general, as that is one of the significant prerequisites for the construction of the new Croatia.' Since the NDH was situated on the 'crossroads of opposing civilisations', the Croat nation could not fulfil its 'historical mission' if it did not protect its 'racial purity.' The Roman Empire's decline

[35] Ibid. As Hutton notes, 'laws passed in the early years of the Nazi regime used the notion of "Aryan descent", but exclusively in its negative form, so that those "of non-Aryan descent" were excluded from different aspects of public life.' Hutton, *Race and Third Reich*, 90.

[36] 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi.'

[37] 'Povjesna važnost zakonskih odredaba o zaštiti arijske krvi', *Novi list*, 3 May 1941, 5.

and fall provided the prime historical example of the danger of miscegenation. The Empire began to disintegrate at the point when 'the large contribution of foreign, in good part Semitic, blood took a firm hold of Rome.' This led to the 'degeneration' of the blood of both the Roman elite and the wider layers of the Roman population.[38] According to an article entitled 'The Croatian Ustasha Movement and the Problem of Race', published in *Novi list* on 17 May 1941, the last twenty years of Yugoslav rule had severely damaged the Croatian people's 'biological and racial purity' because approximately 250,000 marriages had been contracted between 'Croatian weaklings and foreign men and women.' The NDH, in comparison, would 'not tolerate' such a practice.[39]

The Ustasha racial decrees had not mentioned the NDH's Serbian Orthodox minority at all, because the question of the racial origin and identity of the Serbs was considered a much more complex issue in comparison to the more obvious 'non-Aryan' identity of the Jews and Gypsies. Racial propaganda in the NDH often categorised the 'Serb-Vlachs' together with Jews and Gypsies, since a large part of the former group was defined as having a good portion of Gypsy or Near Eastern blood, but many Serbs were also considered to be of Croatian and Serbian-Slavic (i.e. Aryan) blood. Consequently, the Orthodox or 'Greek-Eastern' question was considered a more complex problem requiring a different political and legal approach from the one employed in regard to Jews and Gypsies. With regard to other 'non-Aryan racial communities' in the NDH, the Ministry of Internal Affairs explained that the following peoples were also to be classified as non-Aryans: Tartars, Kalmucks, Armenians, Persians, Arabs, Malays and Blacks.[40] The Hungarians, Finns and Estonians belonged to the 'Aryan community' even though they spoke Finno-Ugric languages; the Albanians were also considered a part of the Aryan community, as was the 'greater part' of the Turkish people.[41]

The classification of the linguistically Indo-European Persians and Armenians as non-Aryans shows the influence of the racial theory of the main expert who drafted the NDH's race laws, Boris Zarnik.[42] Although he was a leading intellectual proponent of Yugoslavism in the

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[38] Ibid.

[39] 'Hrvatski ustaški pokret i problem rase', *Novi list*, 17 May 1941, 5.

[40] 'Utvrdjivanje rasne pripadnosti državnih i samoupravnih službenika i vršitelja slobodnih akademskih zvanja', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 June 1941, 12.

[41] Ibid.

[42] On Zarnik as the author of the race laws, see Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 581. Raul Hilberg noted that 'we need only recall the problems to which the original German

interwar period, Zarnik easily reconciled himself with the new political situation in April 1941. This was not too difficult, considering the fact that the racial ideology of the new regime was based on the promotion of the Aryan and Nordic-Dinaric racial identity of the Croatian people, an idea that was obviously similar to Zarnik's own interwar race theory on the identity of the South Slavs as a whole. In his 1931 article on 'Race and Spiritual Productivity', Zarnik had argued that the contemporary Persians, Armenians and Indians belonged to 'different races' in comparison to the original Nordic race that had been the bearer of all the Indo-Germanic languages.[43] The NDH's race laws thus made a clear distinction between language and race, something completely in line with the tenets of traditional racial anthropology.

Zarnik was a member of the Racial-Political Committee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; other members also included the biologist Zdravko Lorković (1900–1998) and the physician Đuro Vranešić (1897–1946).[44] The Committee was a government agency established in early June 1941 in order to 'prepare proposals and drafts of laws, law decrees and regulations that concern the areas of racial biology, racial politics and racial hygiene or eugenics.' The Committee was also required 'to collect material on the racial and familial statistics' of the NDH.[45] At the end of March 1942 the NDH's Ministry of Education sent an internal letter addressed to a select range of professional employees of the state, including teachers, doctors, philosophers, nurses, lawyers and journalists, notifying them of a two-week theoretical and practical 'Racial-Biological Course' to be held between 13 and 30 April 1942 in Zagreb.[46] The letter explained that the task of the course was 'on the one hand to draw attention to the law of inheritance, and on the other hand to practically enable one part of the attendees in the exercise or supervision of anthropological and psychometric examinations that should be conducted on the whole territory of the Independent State of Croatia.'[47] The Racial-Biological Course included

definition [of a Jew] gave rise to realize that the Croat definition, with all its improvements, was drafted by expert hands.' See Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, 454.

[43] Zarnik, 'Rasa i duševna produktivnost', 134.

[44] Darko Polšek, *Sudbina odabranih: Eugeničko nasljeđe u vrijeme genske tehnologije*, 2004. http://mudrac.ffzg.unizg.hr/~dpolsek/eugenika%20sudbina%20odabranih_cijelo.pdf (Accessed 1 January 2013), 133. On Žanić, see Goldstein, *Holokaust*, 621.

[45] 'Rasno-političko povjerenstvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske', *Hrvatski narod*, 5 June 1941, 6.

[46] Polšek, *Sudbina odabranih*, 133–134.

[47] Ibid., 134.

a series of lectures by Zarnik, Lorković, Vranešić and several other Croatian professors of the biological sciences; among other topics, Zarnik lectured on the subjects of Mendelian laws of inheritance and human races (including the topic of the 'racial elements of Gypsies and Jews').[48]

At the end of July 1941 the Ministry of Internal Affairs had to deal with the question of the racial classification of the assimilated Muslim Gypsies of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As the Muslim religious and political elites of Bosnia and Herzegovina were concerned for the possible fate of their co-religionists, a select committee of Croat Muslim scholars, including the historian Hamdija Kreševljaković (1890–1959), was given the task of submitting a report on this question to the Ministry.[49] The report was based on a number of scholarly sources, most notably an anthropological study of the Gypsies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, written by the Austrian anthropologist Leopold Glück in 1897. The report stated that the Islamic Gypsies of Bosnia and Herzegovina could be divided into two groups: the White Gypsies (*bijeli Cigani*) and Black Gypsies (*crni Cigani* or the so-called *čergaše*).[50] The White Gypsies were of Gypsy origin, but had completely assimilated into the dominant culture through intermarriage with Muslim Croats and had long lost use of their Gypsy language; it was very difficult if not impossible to distinguish between these White Gypsies and Muslim Croats. The Black Gypsies, on the other hand, 'usually live like nomads and are considered real Gypsies.' The report stated, however, that, according to scholarly research, both groups of Gypsies originated from north-western India and 'belong to the Aryan, in other words, Indo-European/Indo-Germanic race.'[51] In the end, however, only the White Gypsies were exempt from the racial law decrees.[52] Catholic and Orthodox Gypsies in the NDH were subject to the race laws, and so too were 401 ethnic Romanian Vlachs from the village of Bošnjaci in north-east Croatia who were classified as Gypsies on the basis of their very dark complexion.[53]

With regard to the case of exempt Jews, the so-called honorary Aryans, it should be underlined that out of a total Jewish population of between 36,000 to 39,000 people, only 100 Jews actually attained the

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[48] Ibid.

[49] See the report 'Pitanje Cigana' ('The Question of the Gypsies') in Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima*, 68–69.

[50] Ibid., 68.

[51] Ibid. Greble mistranslates this part of the report: 'both of these aforementioned classes of Gypsies are considered Aryan, particularly of the Indo-European/Indo-German races.' Greble, *Sarajevo, 1941–1945*, 92.

[52] Lengel-Krizman, *Genocid nad Romima*, 37–39.

[53] Ibid., 39–40.

legal status of Aryan citizens of the NDH (together with their immediate family members they comprised around 500 people).[54] In April 1944 the German ambassador to the NDH, Siegfried Kasche (1903–1947), and the German police attaché in Zagreb, SS-Obersturmbannführer Hans Helm, sent a report to Berlin in which Kasche stated that the 'Jewish question' in the NDH had been solved apart from the cases of Jewish honorary Aryans, Jews in mixed marriages and *Mischlinge* (half- and quarter-Jews). Helm added that the problem of *Mischlinge* and mixed marriages had not been resolved in Germany either.[55] Although the National Socialist regime in principle rejected the notion of Jewish 'honorary Aryans', it did give clemency from the Nuremberg laws to a certain number of protected German Jews (*Schutzjuden*) whose economic or scientific services were required by the Reich.[56] The small minority of protected Jews in the NDH were granted the political rights that belonged to 'individuals of Aryan descent', but they were not classified as racially Aryan. The article on the racial law decrees in *Hrvatski narod* also made clear that the Jewish 'honorary Aryans' and *Mischlinge* would be subject to biological assimilation by the Aryan Croat majority. In other words, individuals of mixed blood, and their descendants, would continually 'interbreed' with persons of 'pure race' until the 'foreign racial factors' were diminished to such a small extent as to be hardly apparent.[57]

The racial anti-Semitism of the Ustasha regime was clearly articulated in the absence of any mention of Josip Frank in Ustasha propaganda. While Ante Starčević, Eugen Kvaternik, Milan Šufflay and even Stjepan Radić were frequently eulogised in the NDH, Josip Frank was consciously forgotten, and this was due to Frank's Jewish origin. Pavelić admitted as much during a meeting with high-ranking Ustasha officials in February 1944. The Poglavnik remarked that one of the reasons why the Croatian Party of Right led by Frank had failed to capitalise on Starčević's greatness and popularity was that 'Frank, who did not emerge from the Croatian national core, could never draw the wider national rank and file with him.'[58]

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[54] Esther Gitman, *When Courage Prevailed: The Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia 1941–1945* (St. Paul MN: Paragon House, 2011), 67.

[55] Hilberg, *Destruction of the European Jews*, 457–458.

[56] See Bryan Mark Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers*: *The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2002), 203.

[57] Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi.' Also see Bartulin, *Honorary Aryans*.

[58] Cited in Jere Jareb, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća 1943–1945 iz ostavštine dra. Lovre Sušića', *Hrvatska revija: Jubilarni zbornik 1951–1975* (München-Barcelona, 1976): 184.

In fact, the Ustasha regime tried to exploit the pre-war 'a-Semitism' of the Croatian Peasant Party (which had attacked Frank precisely because of his Jewish background) to justify its own radical anti-Semitic policy. At the same meeting, the Ustasha *Doglavnik* or deputy party leader Miško Račan (1882–1945) remarked that, when individual citizens had criticised the Ustasha measures against Jews and Serbs at local party meetings, he had always justified these actions by referring to Radić's statements against the Jews and Starčević's views against the Serbs.[59]

The NDH was based, legally and ideologically, upon a racial world view. This fact created constant tensions between the Ustasha regime and the Catholic Church in Croatia. The Ustashe definitely placed nation and race above religion. The basic Ustasha position on religion was summed up in an article in the party newspaper *Ustaša* from 1942: 'we Croats are not particularly devout, we are also not hypocritical bigots, but neither are we atheists nor unbelievers.'[60] The differences between the regime's ideology and Church dogma was made very clear after the Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac (1898–1960), denounced racial ideology in unequivocal terms in several sermons in Zagreb cathedral during 1942 and 1943. In a sermon on 31 October 1943 Stepinac declared that 'the Catholic Church knows nothing of races born to rule and races doomed to slavery', and that, 'for it the negro of central Africa is as much a man as a European.'[61] The NDH's Minister for Education Julije Makanec replied to Stepinac in the Ustasha press on 7 November 1943:

> If man is the image of God, then European man is so to a special degree; he is without doubt more so than a negro of central Africa. A Gothic cathedral surely reflects eternity in a more intense and more sublime manner than a negro's filthy hut or a gypsy's tent; and the Ninth Symphony is certainly nearer to God than the howling of a cannibal tribe in Australia.[62]

The Ustasha regime had always kept a clear ideological distance from the Catholic Church because the aims of the Ustashe were fundamentally secular. The article on the problem of race in *Novi list* from May 1941 declared that the Ustasha movement was 'exclusively Croatian' and only 'racially pure Croats' could participate in it; in fact, the movement was

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[59] Ibid., 185.

[60] 'Vrijednost ustaških znamena', in Petar Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu* (Zagreb: Zagrebačka stvarnost, 1995), 265.

[61] Cited in Stella Alexander, *The Triple Myth: A Life of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 99.

[62] Ibid.

'dogmatically exclusive' in terms of its nationalism.[63] In conference with high-ranking officials of the Ustasha movement in September 1943, Pavelić claimed that there existed three categories in Croatian political life: the 'Starčevićites', 'Clericalists' and 'Slavoserbs', and 'only Starčevićism', Pavelić maintained, 'is the bearer of Croatdom . . . Starčevićism is a racial matter, only it carries Croatdom and the state idea.'[64] In his 1944 booklet, 'Croatia in the Struggle against Bolshevism', Mladen Lorković (then the NDH's Minister of Internal Affairs) wrote that, as a firm opponent of pan-Slavism and socialism, Ante Starčević had been 'a forerunner of racism.'[65] In the same year Julije Makanec similarly argued that, 'although Starčević was a follower of the ideas of the French Revolution, he did not accept the idea of the equality of people, but headed in the paths that brought the concept of nation into direct connection with the concepts of race and blood.'[66] For Starčević, Makanec remarked, the 'Slavoserb breed', which had been formed from the admixture of 'various Balkan refuse', posed a grave threat to the 'racial nobility, purity and firmness of character of the "Croatian breed." '[67]

The Ustasha racial law decrees may have been modelled on the Nuremberg laws, but they were nevertheless consistent with interwar Ustasha ideological principles. This fact did not stop Pavelić from signing a Law Decree on 3 May 1945 abolishing the NDH's racial legislation by equalising the legal status of all state nationals in the NDH regardless of racial affiliation.[68] But this was done solely as part of the pointless effort of presenting a more respectable, 'democratic' face to the victorious Western Allies, in the vain hope of saving an independent Croat state from Yugoslav Partisan destruction by having the NDH placed under the protection of Great Britain and the United States of America.[69] Pavelić's belated law decree was an act of pure opportunism and certainly did not represent an ideological change of heart. At his trial in Zagreb, under the communist

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[63] 'Hrvatski ustaški pokret i problem rase.'

[64] Cited in Jareb, 'Bilješke sa sjednica doglavničkog vijeća', 161.

[65] Mladen Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma* (Zagreb: Nakladna knjižara Velebit, 1944), 39.

[66] Julije Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici: Nacionalno-politički eseji* (Zagreb: Hrvatska državna tiskara, 1944), 43.

[67] Ibid., 42–43.

[68] Slaven Ravlić, 'Kronologija političkih događaja u NDH 1941.–1945.' In Darko Stuparić ed. *Tko je tko u NDH*: *Hrvatska 1941.–1945.* (Minerva: Zagreb, 1997), 446.

[69] Also see Jerome Jareb and Ivo Omrčanin, 'Croatian Government's Memorandum to the Allied Headquarters Mediterranean, May 4, 1945, *Journal of Croatian Studies*, XXI (1980): 120–143.

Yugoslav authorities, in 1945, Mile Budak testified that the NDH's racial laws had been drafted by an 'expert committee by order of the Poglavnik.' Significantly, he admitted that 'all members of the government' had espoused an anti-Semitic point of view.[70]

Conclusion

The Ustasha state had conferred rights not on individuals but only on members of the collective Croatian 'national community.' The Ustashe rejected the liberal principles of the 'European and American traditions, by which the foundation of a state was accompanied by legislation that conferred certain rights and liberties on citizens.'[71] At its core, Ustasha racial ideology was based on the Romanticist notion that the world was basically divided into different peoples possessing their own inherited spiritual traits (even though the discipline of racial anthropology itself originated in the Enlightenment). One of the foremost critics of the Enlightenment and French Revolution, the Catholic writer and diplomat Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821), had famously remarked that he had seen Frenchmen, Italians, Germans and Russians, 'but as for Man, I've never met one in my life.'[72] The head of the Race Policy Office of the National Socialist Party, Walter Gross (1904–1945), similarly declared in 1936: 'Man as such does not exist [for] there are only men belonging to this or that race.'[73]

The National Socialists—and their Ustasha allies—considered the division of humanity into distinct racial, cultural, linguistic and geographical units as part of the natural order. As one German racial theorist claimed in 1936, 'every race, every people is an idea of God's made flesh, which we must nurture. It is our task to protect their distinctive nature.'[74] It should be pointed out that almost all scholars in the Third Reich in the fields of racial anthropology, biology and human genetics accepted monogenism, 'and recognized the biological and genetic unity of the human species.'[75] The fact that human races belonged to a single species and could

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[70] Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija,* 61.

[71] Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution 1919–1953* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 116.

[72] Cited in Davies, *Europe*, 704.

[73] Cited in Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe* (London: Allen Lane, 2008), 11–12.

[74] Cited in Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 16.

[75] Ibid., 77.

therefore interbreed is precisely what had led to widespread concern amongst Europeans about 'racial purity', which in turn led to the introduction of anti-miscegenation laws in Nazi Germany (as well as in the United States).[76] Christopher Hutton argues that National Socialism was ideologically opposed, not to the idea of 'difference', but to the idea of 'assimilation.'[77] Nazi ideologists thus 'shared conventional European racism directed at "inferior" peoples', but they also 'dreamed of an unlimited horizon for the unfolding of difference.'[78] The National Socialists specifically viewed the Jews as 'radically unnatural', rather than 'conventionally inferior', because, as a predominantly urban element of modernity, the 'nomadic' Jews were able to assimilate into different nations and cultures, which threatened the natural ecological order of human diversity.[79]

The Ustasha regime had also promoted the vision of a natural ecology of human order in the argument that every race was equally worthy, but only in its own environment. As Fedor Pucek, the Croat translator of the 1943 edition of Ivo Pilar's 'South Slav Question', had noted in his introduction to this book, the 'main problem' of Croatian history had been 'the mutual assimilation of all components and values that contribute to the internal homogeneity of the national whole.'[80] This homogeneity, however, had been disturbed and threatened by the presence of 'nomadic' peoples such as the Serb-Vlachs, Jews and Gypsies.

[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid., 16.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] See Pucek's introduction in Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, xxv.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE IDEAL RACIAL TYPE: THE ARYAN CROAT

Introduction

The racial narrative presented in the NDH stressed the select and exceptional racial (physical and spiritual) qualities of the Aryan Croat. As centuries of foreign rule were thought to have seriously corrupted a large portion of the Croatian people, the Ustashe regarded it as their main mission to 'reawaken' the racially authentic Croat (*koljenović*). The Ustasha movement thus described its attainment of power in April 1941 as the beginning of a 'Croatian revolution.' This particular 'revolution' was similar to the 'revolutions' taking place in National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy. The National Socialists and Fascists spoke of the revolution that would bring about the 'new man', who in many respects was simply a stereotype of the ancient Germanic or Roman heroes.[1] The Nazis had a clear idea of the physical type of the ideal German (i.e. the Nordic racial type), while the Fascists focused on moulding a modern 'fascist man' of action informed by the eternal Roman past.[2] For the Nazis, 'the man of the future had always existed, even in the past, for the race was eternal, like the trunk of a tree, while the ideal man of Italian fascism created new values.'[3] Otherwise, the Nazis and Fascists shared the vision of the 'new man' being masculine, athletic, brave, spartan and spiritual, 'the very opposite of muddleheaded, talkative, intellectualizing liberals and socialists.'[4]

The Ustashe had a similar vision of the new Croatian man as a type who both represented the future and reflected the past:

> Ustashism is creating the new man in the new order. The new Croatian man, meaning the Ustasha, must be a man of duty, responsibility, work, struggle, honesty, heroism, zeal, [for] he has to be a complete man and Croat. This new man, the Ustasha, must, in his work and in his public and private life,

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1 Mosse, *Fascist Revolution*, 31–33.
2 Ibid., 31–32.
3 Ibid., 32.
4 Ibid., 30–31.

> connect all the new virtues of Ustashism with the virtues of the old Croats, the eternal fighters and warriors.[5]

The New (Old) Croatian Man

The task of creating, or rather reawakening, the new (old) Croatian man was clearly spelled out soon after the Ustashe set up government. On 26 April 1941, in an article in *Hrvatski narod* under the title, 'The Meaning of the Croatian Spiritual Revolution', the writer and journalist Ivo Lendić (1908–1982) sought to explain how the enemies of Croatia had tried to extinguish the Croatian 'spirit.' Spirit was the 'source of strength' for both individuals and communities and that is why 'all those who want to enslave man [and] the nation seek to enslave their soul, for he who has preserved inner freedom, the freedom of one's soul, is not a slave.'[6] The enemies of the Croats had sought to destroy the Croatian spirit or soul by plundering and appropriating the cultural wealth of Croatia. As Lendić argued:

> We had our own Old Croatian language, our own Old Croatian alphabet, our own Old Croatian Glagolitic literature, like no other so-called Slavic people. However, we Croats were not allowed to be proud of this. Along came Czech, Serbian, Russian and Yugoslav scholars who proclaimed that language as Old Slavic, the Glagolitic literature as Old Slavic, the Glagolitic alphabet as Old Slavic.[7]

The same appropriation occurred in the case of Croatian folk poetry, which

> . . . by its quality belongs to the best products ever created by the common spirit of one people on this earth. Our folk ballads surpass the worth of Ossian's ballads. For Goethe, one of the greatest geniuses of the modern age, the Croatian Muslim ballad of The Wife of Hasan-Aga, which was otherwise preserved by Croat Catholics, shined as [an amazing] discovery.[8]

Lendić noted how the Serbs, 'a people without a cultured tradition', even wanted to claim the old Croatian city of Dubrovnik as Serbian, this despite the fact that the Ragusan Republic had actually forbidden any

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[5] Mijo Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi 1928–1941–1944* (Zagreb: 'Ustaša', 1944), 21.
[6] Ivo Lendić, 'Smisao hrvatske duhovne revolucije', *Hrvatski narod*, 26 April 1941, 8.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

Orthodox inhabitant the right to live within its city walls.[9] The Republic of Dubrovnik therefore felt 'insecure' by the very presence of a single Orthodox Christian residing within the city; for Lendić, the 'political wisdom of Croatian Dubrovnik must be a model for us in this respect.'[10] Accordingly, no one but the Croats themselves had the right to rule Croatia. Foreigners such as the 'Serbs, Jews, Slovenes, Czechs and communists' had all tried to 'poison' the Croatian people with the ideologies of Illyrianism, pan-Slavism, Yugoslavism and Marxism. The establishment of the NDH, however, had 'awakened' the 'lordly spirit of the noble Croatian nation.' Lendić argued that, in this part of Europe, the Croat was a 'gentleman', regardless of whether he was 'a peasant, a worker, a craftsman or an intellectual. A gentleman here is a moral-ethical concept in contrast to the concept of the Slavoserb, with which dr. Ante Starčević denotes a man without moral qualities . . . and of a servile nature.'[11]

A Cultured Warrior Nation

As a 'historic nation' the Croats had proven themselves capable of creating a state, and this had been achieved primarily through the use of arms. In a speech held on St. Mark's square in Zagreb on 21 May 1941, the Poglavnik explained that one of the most important branches of national life was the military defence of the Croatian state and nation.[12] The whole world knew that the Croats were a 'military nation', since the 'glory of the Croatian name was carried throughout the world for centuries by the arms of Croatian soldiers.' The Croats were born soldiers, a fact that lay, Pavelić remarked, 'in our blood.'[13] As part of the Ustasha oath, all members of the movement had to swear that they were ready, 'like the Croatian heroes and knights [*vitezovi*] of old, to give their lives . . . for the Poglavnik and the

[9] Ibid. It is indeed a fact that the Republic allowed no Orthodox churches to be built in Dubrovnik and that the prerequisite for Ragusan citizenship was adherence to Catholicism. Before Napoleon occupied Dubrovnik in 1808, there were only a few Orthodox believers (who were referred to as 'Morlachs', in other words, Vlachs) in the city. Ivo Banac, 'The Confessional "Rule" and the Dubrovnik Exception: The Origins of the "Serb-Catholic" Circle in Nineteenth-Century Dalmatia', *Slavic Review*, 42, No. 3 (1983): 452.

[10] Lendić, 'Smisao hrvatske duhovne revolucije.'

[11] Ibid.

[12] 'Braćo Ustaše!' in Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*, 189.

[13] Ibid.

Independent State of Croatia.'[14] As Field Marshal Slavko Kvaternik told the Croatian *Sabor* on 27 February 1942, 'only warrior peoples' possessed a creative spirit, 'because only they have created the greatest and most worthy social community, and that is the state.'[15] The Croats were indeed to be found among those nations that had 'conquered Europe through sword and blood', for they had managed to successfully complete the march from north to south and establish their rule for centuries over the karst (Dinaric) territory, something which even other 'warrior peoples' such as the Avars and Goths had not managed to accomplish.[16] This creative warrior spirit would provide, Kvaternik noted, the 'line of direction and guidance' to those building the new Croatian army.[17]

In an article in the Ustasha party newspaper *Spremnost* ('Readiness'), from April 1942, the Ustasha ideologist and journalist Ivo Bogdan (1907–1971) explained that the state-building creativity of the Croats was a 'racial characteristic' that constituted 'the genius of Croatdom.'[18] This genius had found its fullest expression in the Croat nobility, which had been the main bearer of historic state right. Another significant aspect of Croatian history, Bogdan wrote, was the fact that the Croats had settled in a land that was closely connected with 'the centres of civilisation and progress of the white man.' As their land was situated on the 'eastern rim of the European West', the Croats adopted the best that Western European civilisation had to offer. Bogdan was not suggesting that all civilisational progress throughout history was the product solely of the European continent or only one of its parts, for '. . . the East, Japan, China and mystical India have very high cultures. But we are members of the white race, we live in Europe and there is no doubt that in this region the European West contributed the greatest and most beautiful [aspects].'[19]

An anonymous article in *Hrvatski narod*, from June 1941, argued that the Croats had given humanity and the 'white European race in particular' many illustrious cultural figures throughout history, such as the famous eighteenth-century astronomer Ruđer Josip Bošković and the Renaissance painter Andrija Medulić.[20] The article also noted that 'the ancient

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[14] 'Propisnik o zadaći, ustrojstvu, radu i smjernicama "Ustaše"—hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta', in Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*, 287.

[15] 'Hrvati—ratnički narod', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 February 1942, 3.

[16] Ibid.

[17] 'Vojska i narodne značajke', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 February 1942, 3.

[18] Ivo Bogdan, 'Povjestni značaj ustaške revolucije', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, 3.

[19] Ibid.

[20] 'Hrvatska država i nacionalistička misao', *Hrvatski narod*, 8 June 1941, 14.

Croatian blood adapts its art forms carried from the North to stone' in the new Adriatic homeland. This 'monumental Old Croatian art in stone and marble' proved that the Croatian people had played a 'great civilising role' in this important part of Europe.'[21] In an essay on medieval Bosnian art and architecture published in 1942, Ćiro Truhelka argued that the Croats had been the first people to 'set in order' the 'chaos' in Bosnia, which had been caused by the 'barbarian raids of the Huns and Avars, who leave behind themselves only a bloody trail, ruins and conflagrations. The land is devastated by a ethnic magma, hurled out of Asia, in order to destroy the old culture . . .'[22] The invading Croats, on the other hand, bring with them from their proto-homeland not only the sword, but also the 'axe, plough and distaff, their artistic patterns and their martial organisation.' The Croats, Truhelka remarked, proceeded to build their settlements and state in the Dinaric area. From the local 'cultural remnants of past centuries and from the artistic elements, sprung forth from the national soul', the Croats created their 'almost original' Old Croatian art, which, though unable to match the art of former periods of civilisation, nonetheless represented 'cultural progression and vivacity.' As Truhelka explained, this 'young art, full of vital force' was not destined to last for centuries, because the ascent of the Hungarian kings to the Croatian throne brought the 'completely autarkic culture' of the Croats into a closer bond with central European culture; furthermore, the invasion of the Tartars and the spread of Bogomilism in Bosnia led to a sharp decline in artistic endeavours.[23]

A section on the world's 'Main races and nations' in a geography textbook for Croatian high school students from 1943 noted that the Croats belonged to the 'white or Indo-European race.'[24] All the peoples on earth formed one human species, but the Indo-European race exhibited the greatest abilities and strengths in comparison to the other remaining races (although the 'Mongolian' or 'yellow race' was also capable of great progress).[25] The Indo-European race had settled more than two-thirds of the planet and had subjected more than three-quarters of the earth's surface to its rule. The white race was ahead of all other races in education

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ćiro Truhelka, 'Sredovječni spomenici bosanske Hrvatske', in B. Livadić and M. Jurkić eds. *Hrvatsko kolo: Književno-naučni zbornik XXIII* (Zagreb: "Tipografija", 1942), 1.

[23] Ibid., 1–3.

[24] 'Glavne rase i narodi' in Ivo Juras ed. *Osnove zemljopisa: Za 1. razred srednjih i sličnih škola* (Zagreb: Nakladni odjel hrvatske državne tiskare, 1943), 77.

[25] Ibid., 78.

and culture; on the other hand, 'lesser races' and the 'hybrids of various races show the least ability for progress.'[26]

The racially inherent characteristics of state-building and cultural ability were defined as key factors underpinning the NDH's political structure. In a 1942 article in *Spremnost*, entitled 'The Organisational Ability and Strength of the Croats', a leading Ustasha ideologist, Danijel Crljen (1914–1995), argued that the 'value of our organisation' would be 'one of the most important conditions for the stability, vigour and orderliness' of the NDH. The Poglavnik had already stressed the importance of the Croatian 'organisational spirit' in the Ustasha party program.[27] These organisational skills were not only inherent to the 'warrior Croatian people', but to all conquering and warrior nations. As Crljen remarked, the migration of peoples (*Völkerwanderung*), following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, involved the movement of two groups: on the one hand we discover 'the conquerors and rulers' that conquered land and founded states, while on the other there are the peoples that served the conquerors in their states or who, as slaves, accompanied the conquerors during their victorious campaigns.[28]

The conquering peoples, such as the Croats, had 'ordered mutual relations, an organised family, tribal and national hierarchy', while 'patriarchal discipline' was the 'main characteristic of the constructiveness of the whole people.'[29] It was only upon such foundations, argued Crljen, that 'the enterprising and warrior spirit of the old Croats could come to full expression . . . Only to the strength of its organisation can the Croatian nation give thanks that it did not disappear in the hurricane [of the *Völkerwanderung*].' The conquering Croats were thus able to 'reign over the submissive Slavs' and created three states. In a slight departure from the argument made by Mladen Lorković in 1939, Crljen held that the NDH was the 'third' Croatian state in recorded history, the first being not in the 'Iranian proto-homeland' (of which little was yet known) but along the Vistula River (i.e. White Croatia), while the second state was the medieval Kingdom of Croatia along the Adriatic Sea.[30]

The German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 presented the Ustasha regime with the perfect propaganda opportunity to show the

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[26] Ibid.
[27] Danijel Crljen, 'Organizatorna sposobnost i snaga Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 19 April 1942, 3.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

world their ideal type of the conquering and warrior Croat. One day after the beginning of Operation Barbarossa, Pavelić wrote to Hitler offering the Reich the NDH's military assistance in the war against the Soviet Union. In that way, the Poglavnik argued, 'the old German-Croatian brotherhood-in-arms, which had been confirmed for centuries on all the battlefields of Europe, could once again come to life.'[31] On 2 July 1941 Pavelić issued a public pronouncement calling on Croatian volunteers in 'the struggle against Jewish-Bolshevik Moscow', which was the 'greatest enemy of humanity and Croatdom.'[32] Berlin accepted the Croatian offer of additional troops for the Eastern front, and several thousand Croatian soldiers volunteered for service in the Wehrmacht. The 369th Croatian Reinforced Infantry Regiment (also known as the Croat Legion) arrived in the Ukraine by the beginning of September 1941 and was to see action on many fronts, including Stalingrad. Croatian officers, soldiers and sailors also served in units of the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine; around 8,250 Croatian soldiers or 'Legionnaires' fought on the Eastern front.[33]

Although the number of Croat soldiers in this theatre of war was quite small in comparison to the number of troops sent by other Axis states, the Croatian Legions added greatly to the prestige of the NDH. Overall, the Legionnaires served with great distinction and received much praise from German officers and commanders.[34] The bravery of the Legionnaires was important to the stereotype of the ideal Croat that the regime was trying to impress both on foreigners and the Croats themselves. Only ethnic Croats could become Legionnaires, although Ukrainians and Russians living in the NDH and who 'have no stains in their past or vices in their characters' were also permitted to join the Legions.[35] However, with the exception of their officers, Ukrainian and Russian soldiers were actually not sent to the Eastern front but remained in Croatia itself, for there was concern for the prestige of the Legions. The Croatian army command was

[31] Cited in Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i ustaše*, 491.

[32] Cited in Milan Pojić, *Hrvatska pukovnija 369. na istočnom bojištu 1941–1943*. (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2007), 9.

[33] Ivan Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u drugom svjetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1992), 167–256. Also see Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*, 266–267.

[34] During a visit to Croatian troops in the Ukraine in 1942, Pavelić was told by the Commander of the German Sixth Army, General Friedrich Paulus, that the Croats were the best soldiers of all Germany's *Hilfsvölker* (allies): after the Croats 'came the Slovaks and Romanians and in last place the Hungarians and Italians.' See Rudolf Kiszling, *Die Kroaten: Der Schicksalsweg eines Südslawenvolkes* (Graz-Köln: Verlag Hermann Böhlaus Nachf., 1956), 188.

[35] Pojić, *Hrvatska pukovnija*, 16.

of the opinion that, since their soldiers in the Wehrmacht were to 'represent our young state', it was essential that only the physically and mentally best elements were permitted to enter the ranks of the Legions.[36]

The Ustasha aim to 'reawaken' the martial spirit of the Croats received the support of the leader of the new Europe when Field Marshal Kvaternik met Adolf Hitler on 21 July 1941 at the Wolf's Lair in east Prussia. Hitler told Kvaternik that he was 'convinced' that the Croats were a true *Soldatenvolk* ('nation of soldiers') and therefore believed that the Croatian volunteers would feel quite at home among 'our soldiers in Germany.'[37] Referring to the war against the Soviet Union, the Führer remarked that the Russians were 'no soldiers, but beasts', while '70 to 80% of the Russian people' were Mongols in a racial sense (they were all 'small people'), along with some 'Slavic types' and other races.[38] Kvaternik noted that the Russian soldiers of the First World War were quite different from the present day soldiers of the Soviet army for the former had been mainly composed of Russian peasants; Hitler remarked that the Bolsheviks had exterminated the peasant population.[39] For Hitler, the war against the Soviet Union was necessary in order to protect Europe against the threat of the Mongolian race (*Mongolentum*).[40] Hitler made similar comments to Croatian ambassador Mile Budak in Berlin on 14 February 1942: the people of the Soviet Union were beasts (*Bestien*) and the 'type of the obstinate, blond Russian soldier of the [First] World War' had now been replaced by a new Asiatic race.[41]

In a report on the 369th Regiment to Field Marshal Kvaternik, from late February 1942, Lieutenant-Colonel Ivan Babić remarked that the bravery of Croatian soldiers on the Eastern front proved that the 'military spirit' of the Croatian people was alive and well despite twenty-three years of the 'destructive' influence of the Yugoslav state.[42] Babić admitted that the average Croatian soldier 'lagged behind' the German soldier in terms of organisation, discipline, military training, professionalism and 'general moral education.' On the other hand, the Croatian soldier was 'without

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Cited in Andreas Hillgruber ed. *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler: Vertrauliche Aufzeichnungen über Unterredungen mit Vertreten des Auslandes 1939–1941* (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1967), 612.

[38] Ibid., 609, 613–614.

[39] Ibid., 614.

[40] Ibid., 613.

[41] Hitler cited in *Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918–1945*, Serie E: 1941–1945, Band 1: 12.: Dezember 1941 bis 28. Februar 1942 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), p. 476.

[42] Cited in Pojić, *Hrvatska pukovnija*, 324–325.

rival' in terms of his 'racial military and warrior characteristics', and the fighting skills of the Croatian soldier lay in his 'blood and instinct.'[43] In a chapter from a 1943 collection of essays on the NDH in German, *Kroatien Baut Auf*, the Croatian general Milan Desović, one of the commanding officers of the 369th regiment, praised the Croat Legionnaires who had fought 'shoulder to shoulder with the best soldiers of the world, the Germans', in the heroic battle of Stalingrad in order to defend Europe from the 'attack of the East.'[44] Desović remarked that the Croatian volunteers had fought near the proto-homeland of the Croats on the shores of the Sea of Azov, where they had been settled as an 'Iranian warrior people' (*iranisches Kriegervolk*).[45]

For the Ustashe, the virtue of Croat military heroism went hand in hand with Croat cultural ability. In his 1943 article in *Spremnost* entitled 'The Cultural Ability of the Croats', Ivan Krajač argued that 'the essential features of the untainted Croatian national character', which had remained generally the same throughout history, were 'threefold': 'The first [characteristic] is the feeling of honour, honesty and the straight path, which is completely contrary to the typical trait of the Orient. The second is military heroism, bravery and ability. The third is cultural ability…'[46] Krajač stated that the successful preservation of these unique traits meant that the 'basic blood elements' and 'racial foundation' of the Croats had not undergone any essential change throughout their history, since a transformation in that respect would have led to the alteration of the 'specific and rare' traits of the Croat national character. Krajač concluded that the preservation of these traits also meant that the Croats had not received any significant admixture of 'Semitic blood' throughout their 'prehistory and history', with the exception of an 'insignificant number of mixed–bloods in the towns in the most recent period.' All three Croatian national traits were 'mutually linked and mutually complementary.'[47]

In the same year, in a two volume work edited by Filip Lukas entitled 'Our Homeland', the nationalist intellectual Marijan Stojković argued that the Croats were 'well known and seasoned' as a warrior and state-building people that 'yearns for freedom and glory.' Furthermore, the Croat was a

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[43] Ibid., 325.
[44] Milan von Dessovich, 'Kroatische Bewährung in Stalingrad', *Kroatien Baut Auf* (Zagreb: Europa-Verlag, 1943), 123.
[45] Ibid., 126.
[46] Ivan Krajač, 'Kulturna sposobnost Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 6 June 1943, 9.
[47] Ibid.

proud and self-reliant landowner, a 'free peasant' and 'koljenović.'[48] In a report on the NDH's Armed Forces from 1944, General Tomislav Sertić (1902–1945) wrote that 'the Croat was never a slave. Whether he fought under the Crescent or Cross, as the Sultan's or the Emperor's soldier, he was always the best . . . In that time the notion of Croat was equal to the notion of warrior.'[49] Sertić added, however, that, generally speaking, only the Dinaric type of Croat was 'nationally constructive' or fitted to building a state (*državotvoran*); the Dinaric man 'knows what he wants and therefore proceeds toward his . . . goal unscrupulously and consistently.'[50]

The Dinaric Race and the Nordic Racial Strain

As a typical white Indo-European speaking people, the Croats were said to bear the traits of the main European races: Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Mediterranean and East Baltic. At the same time, the NDH's scholars and ideologists who wrote on the subject of race stressed the ideal physical and spiritual qualities of the Dinaric and Nordic races, which were regarded as the leading and decisive types in the Croatian people's racial composition. According to the general academic and ideological view in the NDH, the Dinaric and Nordic races, or more specifically, a Nordic-Dinaric racial admixture, had been chiefly responsible for the establishment of the Croatian state and its major cultural achievements.

In his chapter on the NDH's geographical and geopolitical position, published in the 1942 textbook, 'The Geography of Croatia', Filip Lukas argued that the early medieval Croat settlers in Roman Dalmatia had interbred with the older inhabitants of this province, mainly Romanised Illyrians and probably also with the Goths.[51] He noted that 'a significant racial type'—the Dinaric race—had been formed on the territory of Croatia, hence the name of this type being derived from the Dinaric Alps.[52] It was still a matter of scientific uncertainty as to whether the Dinaric race had been a separate type from prehistoric times or whether it had been

[48] Marijan Stojković, 'Etnografija', in Filip Lukas ed. *Naša domovina: Hrvatska zemlja—hrvatski narod—hrvatska poviest—hrvatska znanost* (Zagreb: Tiskara Matice hrvatskih akademičara, 1943), Chapter VI, Vol. 1, 86.

[49] HDA, MUP NDH, Kutija 37: 013. 3/2: 'Analiza Vojske NDH od Gen. Tomislava Sertića, 1944. god.: "problem hrvatske vojske", 1–2.

[50] Ibid., 23.

[51] Filip Lukas, 'Zemljopisni i geopolitički položaj', in Zvonimir Dugački ed. *Zemljopis Hrvatske: Opći dio*, Vol. 1 (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska 1942), 25–27.

[52] Ibid., 28.

formed from an admixture between 'darker Armenoids and fairer Nordics' (with one part of the Slavs belonging to the Nordic race). In any case, the Dinaric race in Croatia included a number of subtypes of darker or fairer complexion. According to Lukas, 'a belt of fairer complexion' was located in central Bosnia, which showed that the Croat settlers (i.e. Slavs of fair Nordic race) had been more numerous in this region than the older inhabitants. The purest type of Dinaric man was found on the territory of the Croatian state, particularly in Herzegovina and in the border area between Bosnia and Dalmatia; the Dinaric type was also found in other countries, especially in the Tyrol and in southern Germany (for example, Goethe and Schiller bore the traits of the Dinaric type). Lukas remarked that, apart from the dominant Dinaric racial type, there was also a strong concentration of the Alpine race in the Danubian north of Croatia, alongside representatives of the Sudetan and East Baltic races and a sufficient number of Nordics. The Adriatic area was home to members of the Mediterranean racial type, though these individuals were not of pure (Mediterranean) race.[53]

Lukas pointed out that the greater part of Croatian territory belonged to the Balkan Peninsula. This Dinaric part of Croatia was the 'gravity centre of our people', in which the first Croatian state had been formed and which had best preserved the Croatian language and original cultural creations. The Dinaric area still had a 'great strength in our national life and a great significance for our further development.' According to Lukas, the Balkans formed a world of its own—distinct from both East and West—in a cultural and racial sense.[54] He argued that the 'peculiarity of the Balkans and its cosmic forces' were so strong that even four hundred years of Turkish rule had not led to a 'process of degeneration.' On the contrary, after the collapse of Ottoman rule, the Balkan peoples reappeared on the stage of history 'full of vital force and anthropological freshness.'[55] Although the peripheral western parts of Croatia had been exposed to predominantly Western cultural influences, the Croatian people as a whole had not lost their 'spiritual peculiarity', and this was due to the dominant blood of the Balkan-Dinaric Croats and their original patriarchal culture.[56]

In a study on Bosnian geography and history published in 1942, Lukas stated that the Muslim and Catholic Croat inhabited areas of central Bosnia

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid., 32–33.
[55] Ibid., 33.
[56] Ibid.

contained the highest number of 'fairer Dinarics', while darker Dinaric types were found in southwestern Croatia.[57] It was clear, Lukas noted, that the Dinaric and Mediterranean races had been settled in the Balkans from the earliest times; the Dinaric race was concentrated in the northwestern part, while the Mediterranean type was found in the peripheral coastal areas of the peninsula. The proto-Slavs had, together with the Germanic peoples, belonged to the Nordic race.[58] The Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina had largely preserved their Nordic-Dinaric racial heritage, since anthropological research had showed that the 'largest percentage of fair types' among the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina was found among the Muslims, closely followed by the Catholics (while the Orthodox had the lowest number).[59] For Lukas, 'this is one more argument that confirms the instinctual thinking of dr. Ante Starčević, [namely] that the Bosnian Muslims are the ethnically purest preserved part of the Croatian people.'[60] The Nordic racial element in the Croatian people would have thus originated from the proto-Slavic Croats, while the Dinaric type was derived from the admixture with the Romanised Illyrians. In his chapter on Croatian geopolitics published in 'Our Homeland' (1943), Lukas argued that effective Roman organisation and gradual Romanisation had not succeeded in changing the 'racial traits' of the indigenous Illyrians in Dalmatia.[61] Indeed, through the later admixture of the Croatian settlers and Illyrians, the Dinaric 'bodily-spiritual characteristics' of the latter became predominant among the Croats.[62] The Croats preserved this 'racial heritage' throughout the centuries and, in doing so, a distinct racial type was 'further developed in the purest form' on Croatian territory.[63]

In a speech given on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of *Matica Hrvatska* in July 1943, Lukas again referred to the racial history and identity of the Croats, arguing that representatives of the Dinaric race had established the first medieval Croatian state along the Adriatic. The Dinaric race was 'characterised by a fighting spirit and aspirations of

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[57] Filip Lukas, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', in *Povijest Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463* (1942: reprint Sarajevo: Hrvatsko kulturno društvo Napredak, 1998), 67.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 68.

[60] Ibid.

[61] 'Geopolitička osnova Nezavisne Države Hrvatske', in Lukas ed. *Naša Domovina*, Chapter 1, Vol. 1, 3.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., 6.

independence and freedom.'[64] Also, he again pointed out that, apart from the dominant Dinaric race, Croatia was also populated by the Nordic race (especially in central Bosnia), followed by the Alpine, Eastern (Armenoid) and Sudetan races.[65] In an essay on Croatian culture published in 1944 Lukas argued that, throughout the world, mountainous areas acted as 'fortresses' protecting original cultures, but 'there is not a region in Europe where the old original [patriarchal and warrior] culture would be better preserved' than in the Dinaric region of Croatia.[66] Although the Dinaric race was found in other countries, its 'purest core' was located in the western Balkans; in this essay Lukas stated that the Dinaric race was indeed formed from an admixture between Armenoids and Nordic settlers, which had occurred in the Balkans in the late Stone Age.[67]

The importance Lukas attached to the role of the Dinaric and Nordic races in the racial history and identity of the Croats was also emphasised by other intellectuals and ideologists in the NDH writing on the subject of race. In July 1942 *Spremnost* published an article by the Croatian sociologist and ethnographer Mirko Kus-Nikolajev (1896–1961), which analysed the Croat 'racial composition' and the positive influence of 'Nordic admixtures.'[68] Kus-Nikolajev began the article by remarking that, contrary to widespread opinion, the Croats had been the specific subject of racial-anthropological research. Among others, the anthropologists Joseph Deniker and Eugène Pittard had argued that the 'foundation' of the racial composition of the Croats consisted of the Dinaric race. Kus-Nikolajev also explained that the Dinaric type found in the theories of Jovan Cvijić and Vladimir Dvorniković did not refer to a racial or anthropological type, but to an 'ethnopsychological type.' Furthermore, Cvijić's 'Dinaricism' had been an instrument of 'Greater Serbian politics.'[69]

Kus-Nikolajev argued that Deniker's racial typology was, despite its shortcomings, still the most suitable system of classifying the European races.[70] He also referred to other anthropological models of classification, including that of the German anthropologist Egon von Eickstedt (1892–1965),

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[64] Filip Lukas, *Ličnosti—stvaranja—pokreti* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1944), 231.
[65] Ibid., 232.
[66] 'Osebnost hrvatske kulture', in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1944), 143.
[67] Ibid., 144.
[68] Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata: Nordijske primjese pojačavaju i onako visoku životnu i kulturnu vriednost hrvatskog naroda', *Spremnost*, 12 July 1942, 5.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.

who had identified five European races (Nordic, Baltic, Dinaric, Mediterranean and Alpine). Eickstedt regarded the Dinarics as the original inhabitants of their 'living space', although they had also intermixed with the Nordic, Alpine and East Baltic races in bordering areas.[71] Kus-Nikolajev was further partial to the model of the Polish anthropologist Jan Czekanowski (1882–1965) who had classified four main races in Europe: the Nordic, Ibero-Insular (Mediterranean), Laponoid and Armenoid races.[72] According to Czekanowski, the contemporary Alpine race was the anthropological product of an admixture between the Laponoid and Mediterranean races, while the Dinaric race was the product of an admixture of the Armenoid and Nordic races. Kus-Nikolajev further noted that Hans Günther had drawn attention to the 'striking similarities' between the Dinaric and Nordic races.[73]

According to Kus-Nikolajev, a large part of Croatia, stretching from the northern Adriatic, across Lika and central Bosnia, to the Drina River was inhabited by people of Dinaric racial type with 'a strong admixture of the Nordic racial element.'[74] Although the entire Dinaric region actually contained a greater number of Dinarics with a stronger Armenoid racial admixture, the area with a greater Nordic strain was nonetheless of 'considerable significance for the Croatian racial form.' As Kus-Nikolajev remarked, 'racial psychology gives the Dinaric race a high life and cultural value. The strengthening of the Nordic element in the Dinaric race would also mean the strengthening of the positive traits in our nation.' He added that the Nordic element in the 'Croatian racial type' could probably be traced to Croatian admixture with the Illyrians, 'who belonged to the Nordic race', and perhaps to the Nordic Celts as well, for they had most likely interbred with the Illyrians.[75] In an article on the Nordic origins of Old Croatian art, published in *Spremnost* in April 1942, Kus-Nikolajev

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[71] Ibid. A leading race psychologist, Eickstedt accepted Günther's racial classification. See Egbert Klautke, 'German "Race Psychology" and Its Implementation in Central Europe: Egon von Eickstedt and Rudolf Hippius', in Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling eds. *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe 1900–1940* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), 27.

[72] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata.' According to Czekanowski, the Slavs had been predominantly Nordic in the prehistoric period. Jan Czekanowski, 'Anthropologische Struktur der Slaven im Lichte polnischer Untersuchungsergebnisse', *Etnolog*, 10–11 (1937/1939): 233.

[73] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata.' Also see Hans F. K. Günther, *Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (München-Berlin: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1941), 19, 62–64.

[74] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata.'

[75] Ibid.

argued that the original Iranian Croats had also belonged to the Nordic race.[76]

Alongside the dominant Dinaric racial type, Kus-Nikolajev noted (in his article from July 1942) the presence of other racial types among the Croats, particularly the 'visible' number of individuals of Mediterranean race along the central and southern Adriatic coast and on the Adriatic islands (especially in the towns), and the strong concentration of the Laponoid and/or Alpine race in northern and northeastern Croatia.[77] Kus-Nikolajev pointed out, however, that the influence of the Mediterranean racial type was not 'decisive' in the Croatian racial composition. He also added cautiously that further racial examinations of the Croats still had to be carried out and that the 'racial question' itself, in other words, the study of the influence of race on human character and life had not yet reached its final conclusions. Kus-Nikolajev thus concluded that, in spite of its 'decisive' role, race was not the only factor to consider when examining the life of man and nations: he noted that Eickstedt had remarked on the importance of the heavily wooded landscape of southeastern Europe for the life of the Dinaric race. Accordingly, further research into the Dinaric race would have to consider other factors such as soil, environment and history.[78] Kus-Nikolajev was thus in favour of a 'Lamarckian', or environmental, race theory, which emphasised the influence of the 'natural environment and geography' on modifying the 'hereditary racial characteristics' of a particular race.[79]

Kus-Nikolajev also included illustrations of three famous Croat political and cultural figures as a visual representation of the main Croatian racial types: the round-faced, portly, northern Croat Stjepan Radić was described as a 'Laponoid (Alpine) type'; the swarthy Ivan Meštrović from the Dalmatian hinterland was a 'Dinaric type with pronounced Armenoid traits'; and the fair-skinned Croat poet Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević (1865–1908)

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[76] Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Nordijsko podrietlo starohrvatskog pletenca', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, 7.

[77] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata.'

[78] Ibid.

[79] See Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 187. Lamarckianism refers to the evolutionary theory of the French scientist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744–1829), which postulated that organisms could pass onto their descendants characteristics acquired under environmental pressures. This theory led to the development of a race theory based on the importance of the environment to racial evolution. This theory was more popular in Italy than in Germany where most racial anthropologists adhered to Mendelian genetics. Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 21–22, 110–111, 187.

was defined as a 'Dinaric type with a strong Nordic admixture.'[80] Lukas had also pointed to the physical features of Croat political and cultural leaders in order to highlight the dominant Dinaric racial traits of the Croats. The distinguished Dalmatian Croat archaeologist and Catholic priest Frane Bulić (1846–1934) was thus described by Lukas in 1944 as 'a pure descendant of the Dinaric race according to his bodily appearance.'[81] According to Lukas, the Dinaric race was also dominant on the littoral of the eastern Adriatic coast, where there were 'very few representatives of the western, so-called Mediterranean race.' The Dalmatian Croat politician Ante Trumbić from the coastal town of Split was also

> a pronounced Dinaric type . . . while his spiritual characteristics are pure Croatian, above all his pride . . . the persistent struggle for rights, idealism and optimism, that extraordinary unselfishness, self-sacrifice and ethics, and all of these are traits of his Croatian type, by which he is manifestly separated from the Mediterraneans on the Apennine Peninsula.[82]

Even the famous Croat writer of non-Croat ethnic descent, August Šenoa (1838–1881), was closely related to the Croatian people by 'blood,' even if he was not a 'pure representative of the Dinaric race.' Šenoa's parents originated, as Lukas explained, from Slovakia, a country which included both the Nordic and Dinaric races. Consequently, Šenoa had inherited a 'component of the Dinaric race,' and this had enabled him to 'spontaneously and rapidly accept our ideals.'[83]

In November 1942 *Spremnost* published an article by the Ustasha ideologist, editor and journalist Milivoj Karamarko (1920–1945), which examined the Dinaric race and 'the positive contribution of the Nordic race.' Karamarko noted that science was divided between the anthropologists who held that the Dinaric type was an original race, and those who argued that the Dinaric race was formed from the admixture of the Nordic and Armenoid racial types; the majority of anthropologists adhered to the latter argument.[84] In any case, Karamarko remarked, it was clear from Deniker's authoritative classification that the Dinarics formed a separate racial type. Karamarko added that it was still a matter of debate as to whether the Croats and other Balkan peoples came into contact with the Dinaric

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[80] Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata.'
[81] Lukas, *Ličnosti—stvaranja—pokreti*, 85.
[82] Ibid., 123.
[83] Ibid., 76. Šenoa was actually of both Czech-German and Slovak descent.
[84] Milivoj Karamarko, 'Dinarska rasa i Hrvati: Osebujne naše značajke i pozitivni prinos nordijske rase', *Spremnost*, 22 November 1942, 7.

race upon their arrival to the Balkans ('for it is argued that the old Croats belonged to the Nordic race'), or whether the proto-Croats were themselves of Dinaric type.[85]

Karamarko cited the work of Lukas and Pittard in order to stress the close links between the Croatian people and Dinaric race. The purest region of the Dinaric race was located on 'Croatian geopolitical, ethnic and historical soil', while the spreading out of the Dinaric race also represented the expansion of the 'Croatian racial space'; this expansion had occurred during the migration of peoples, through the conquest of territory during the period of Croatian dukes and kings, and through the migration of Croats to neighbouring lands at the time of the Ottoman invasions.[86] People of Dinaric race had been the main bearers of the Croatian language, customs and ethnic consciousness. Karamarko estimated that no less than 65% (and probably even more) of Croats belonged to the Dinaric race; as for the remaining races, 20% of Croats were of Alpine racial type, 10% of Nordic race, followed by 5% of Armenoid race, 3% of East Baltic race, 1% Mediterranean and only 1% were of 'Mongoloid and some other Near Eastern race.'[87] The Dinaric race was especially predominant in central and southern Croatia, where it was 'particularly pronounced and pure.' Dinarics could also be found in northern and northeastern Croatia, but intermixed to a large degree with the Alpine race; Nordic and Mediterranean racial types were also found in northern and southern Croatia respectively, though not as pure racial types, but rather, as 'variants of the Dinaric type' (i.e. Nordic-Dinaric and Mediterranean-Dinaric admixtures). Similarly to Nordic individuals, members of the Dinaric race were characterised by a tall stature and a long, narrow face, though the Dinaric skull was brachycephalic. As Karamarko noted, some anthropologists had also classified the 'fair-haired Dinaric type' and it was clear that there were 'strong bodily similarities' between the Dinaric and Nordic types; for example, Dinarics often had a 'fair admixture.'[88]

Although he admitted that the Dinaric and Armenoid races shared similar traits, Karamarko also pointed to the considerable physical and psychic differences between these two racial types. While the tall Dinaric had a well-developed and well-proportioned body, the tall Armenoid possessed a long body with short legs and also had a dark complexion (his

[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.

skin was actually of a yellowish colour).[89] Furthermore, the Armenoid type was characterised by a personality prone to trickery, fawning and cheating, while such traits were 'racially completely foreign' to the Dinaric. Karamarko concluded that the Croats could be 'completely satisfied' with regard to the physical characteristics of the Dinaric race, 'because it is a healthy, strong race, very tenacious . . . while the share of the Nordic [race], which is the closest to the Dinaric, strengthens these values and characteristics to a considerable measure.'[90] In March 1942 a representative in the NDH's *Sabor*, Mirko Košutić (1869–1945), had similarly remarked that the 'idealistic' Croats were a trustworthy, dependable and honest nation because (among other reasons) they had 'received into their blood strong admixtures of the ethical Nordic race.'[91]

In a section on the 'Earth and its Population' in the 1942 edition of a popular Croatian encyclopaedia, the geographer Zvonimir Dugački (1903–1974) noted that 'racial affiliation is independent of linguistic and national affiliation', so that all European nations consisted of one or more of the five principal races: Nordic, Mediterranean, Alpine, Baltic and the tall, chestnut-haired and broad-headed Dinaric racial type.[92] These European races formed part of the white racial group, one of the three largest racial groupings of humankind (alongside the yellow and black races); races were differentiated by both physical and mental characteristics.[93] In Europe itself, the northern Germans were predominantly Nordic, while the southern Germans belonged to the Alpine and Dinaric races; the northern French were largely of Nordic and Alpine race, the southerners of Mediterranean racial type; the northern Italians were mainly Alpine and Dinaric, the southern Italians Mediterranean; the main racial traits of the Croats were Dinaric, with smaller numbers of Croats belonging to the Alpine and Nordic races.[94] In a book on Croatian history and culture published in German in 1942, *Die Kroaten*, the NDH's Education Minister and one-time ambassador to Berlin, Stjepan Ratković, observed that all the European races were to be found among the Croats, but the Dinaric race, with its 'highly developed bodily and spiritual peculiarities', was the

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89 Ibid.
90 Ibid.
91 Mirko Košutić, 'Ništetnost državnih čina od 1918.', *Spremnost*, 15 March 1942, 1.
92 Zvonimir Dugački, 'Zemlja i njezino stanovništvo', in Ivo Horvat ed. *Znanje i radost: Enciklopedijski zbornik* (Zagreb: Naklada hrvatskoga izdavalačkog bibliografskog zavoda, 1942), 203.
93 Ibid., 201–202.
94 Ibid., 203.

most widespread racial type.[95] Ratković noted that the Near Eastern and 'other Asiatic races' were only to be found in 'isolated' numbers, for the Croatian part of the Balkan Peninsula had not been a 'settlement area for Asiatic racial components.'[96]

The Croatian writer Ante Tresić Pavičić (1867–1949) praised the ideal Nordic-Dinaric, or 'Aryan', Croatian racial type in his 1942 book, 'The Expulsion of the Mongols from Croatia.' According to the author, 'the Croatian prototype is a highlander, [a] lean, tall and broad-shouldered hero [with] grey and blue eyes, just as everything around him is blue: the rugged mountains, the sky and the blue sea.'[97] Noting that the medieval Croats who encountered the invading Mongol forces under Genghis Khan in the thirteenth century referred to their enemies as *pasoglavci* ('dog-heads'), Tresić Pavičić remarked that, 'indeed, their [Mongol] exterior appearance, when compared to the handsome Aryan type that inhabits our lands, could provoke nothing but disgust, fear and horror.'[98] During the Mongol invasions, Croatian women and children were sheltered in the mountains and forests to protect them from death or rape, in other words, to prevent the 'injection of impure Tartar blood into Croatian Aryan veins.'[99]

In his introduction to the 1943 edition of Ivo Pilar's 'South Slav Question', Fedor Pucek argued that the Nordic Slavic element was the largest 'racial component' among the Croats, although the equally Nordic and leading 'Gothic-Iranian component' was also 'comparatively very high', because the 'conquerors and ruling layers' everywhere had greater opportunities for 'biological survival' and reproduction than the racial elements that were subject to them.[100] The Croats had thus preserved the original 'Nordic Slavic-Gothic-Iranian component' to a far greater extent than the other Balkan peoples, since the 'fairer elements, which today we partially term Nordic or European in a narrower sense', remained predominant among the Croats throughout the centuries.[101] In a book published in Vienna in 1944 entitled 'Croatia, a Land of Beauty', the historical writer

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[95] Stjepan Ratković, 'Einiges über Natur, Volk und Wirtschaft im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien', in Clemens Diederich ed. *Die Kroaten* (Zagreb: Verlagsbuchhandlung Velebit, 1942), 17.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ante Tresić Pavičić, *Izgon Mongola iz Hrvatske* (Zagreb: "Tipografija", 1942), 17.

[98] Ibid., 41.

[99] Ibid., 182.

[100] Pucek's Introduction in Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, xxvi.

[101] Ibid., xxvii.

and journalist Josip Horvat wrote that 'the Croatian man combines within himself the temperament of the Southerner and the tallness of the Northerner, the pride of the noble ancient men of good stock [*koljenovići*] and the harmony of the cultured European.' Furthermore, the 'learned world' had established that in the surroundings of Dubrovnik one could find the 'most beautiful human type in Europe.'[102]

In 1944 the *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* in Berlin published an article by the Croatian anthropologist Franjo Ivaniček entitled 'Contributions to the Anthropology and Racial History of the Croats.' Ivaniček resided in Berlin in 1942 as a guest scholar at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology; he studied as a doctoral student under the supervision of Eugen Fischer.[103] Ivaniček's article was based on an anthropometric survey of 248 pupils between the ages of 7 and 17 from Mostar in Herzegovina—which formed part of the district of Hum in the NDH—conducted by R. Smoljan in 1928/1929. Ivaniček explained that this part of south Croatia could shed light on the racial history of the Croats, since it was, on the one hand, the 'first kernel of Croatian state-forming efforts' in the early medieval period, while, on the other, this area had undergone great ethnic and racial changes during the period of Ottoman rule, which was accompanied by the migration and settlement of Serb-Vlach and Near Eastern racial elements.[104]

Ivaniček noted that the Dinaric race was the predominant racial type found in present day Croatia and its purest representatives were located in the northwestern, central and southern parts of the NDH. As Ivaniček argued, in no other part of Europe could one find 'such a pure Dinaric type.'[105] The Dinaric race was also predominant in the remaining parts of Croatia, although there were also marked Alpine racial influences in northern and northeastern Croatia, as well Nordic influences in the northeast, which were probably brought there by Swabian settlers.[106] In addition, there were traces of the Mediterranean racial type along the eastern

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[102] Josip Horvat, 'Lice hrvatskog čovjeka', in August Frajtić ed. *Hrvatska: Zemlja ljepote* (Wien: Verlag Rudolf Hans Hammer, 1944), 9.

[103] Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics, 1927–1945: Crossing Boundaries*. Boston Studies in the Philospohy of Science, Vol. 259, Springer, 2008, 281.

[104] Franjo Ivaniček, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie und Rassengeschichte der Kroaten (Eine Untersuchung an Schülern aus Gau Hum.)', *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie*, 41, No. 1 (1944): 179–180.

[105] Ibid., 178–179.

[106] Ibid., 179.

Adriatic. Apart from the Alpine race, however, the influences of the other racial types on the overall Croatian racial composition were 'insignificant.' On the other hand, the presence of the dark-skinned Near Eastern race (*vorderasiatische Rasse*) in Croatia was an important question for Croatian anthropology because some anthropologists did not distinguish between the Dinaric and Near Eastern races; in contrast to this view, Ivaniček argued that in Croatia these two racial types were quite separate from each other.[107] He limited the Near Eastern racial influence in Croatia to the minority Serb-Vlach Orthodox population (see next chapter).

Ivaniček stated that the contemporary Muslim and Catholic Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina represented 'the purest ethnic and racial element of the Croatian people.'[108] The Islamic and Catholic religious traditions, together with the 'pure patriarchal character' of old Croatian social customs, had not tolerated 'religious and tribal exogamy.' Accordingly, marriages between Islamicised Croats and the Turkish occupiers only occurred in very exceptional cases.[109] The results of the anthropometric study from Mostar showed that the Dinaric type was 'almost exclusively' found among Muslim and Catholic pupils.[110] The study had, Ivaniček argued, confirmed the predominance of Dinaric racial features: tall height, brachycephalic skulls and a darker complexion. He noted that there was some debate among anthropologists on the question of the Dinaric facial form: while Eugen Fischer had characterised the Dinaric face as long to medium long, the Austrian scholar Moriz Hoernes (1852–1917) defined it as broad. Ivaniček himself remarked that the results of the Mostar study had shown a tendency toward a slightly bigger facial breadth.[111]

With regard to the question of complexion, the study, Ivaničk wrote, had concluded that 80% of the pupils were of a 'medium-brown complexion': this colour included all shades from 'dark-brown, yellow-brown and light-brown' and covered hair and eye colour and the complexion of the brow and cheeks.[112] A fair complexion with blond hair and light eyes was found only among 11% of the students; the percentage of fair pupils, however, was actually 'considerable' if one took into consideration the fact that blondness was a recessively inherited trait. Ivaniček hypothesised

[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., 180.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid., 192.
[111] Ibid., 191.
[112] Ibid., 187.

that the blondness found among the Croats could be traced to the historical settlements of Slavs or Antes and Goths in the western Balkans. He added that one could not make any precise conclusions on this matter because of the limited number of pupils examined and also because the hair of children could change over time. Nevertheless, the topic of blondness among the Croats was a 'very interesting anthropological question' and the answer to this question was also important for understanding the racial history of the Croats.[113]

The Nordic Slavic-Gothic-Iranian Herrenschicht

Croatian historians and Ustasha ideologists in the NDH were also very interested in the question of the precise ethnolinguistic origins of the Croatian people. The Ustasha regime did not officially subscribe to any one ethnolinguistic theory (i.e. Slavic, Iranian or Gothic) on Croat origins. However, an intellectual and ideological consensus was reached on this subject in the NDH. This consensus rested on the historiographical theory that the proto-Croats had formed the non-Slavic ruling caste or 'master stratum' (German: *Herrenschicht*) of a Slavic population in White Croatia and, after their settlement in the western Balkans, the ruling layer of the remnants of the Illyrians, Celts, Goths, Avars and other Slavs inhabiting the former Roman provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia. Most of the NDH's intellectuals and ideologists writing on the topic of ethnolinguistic origins emphasised the Iranian origin of the Croat ruling caste, while also stressing the important role of the Goths. Fedor Pucek, for his part, had suitably described the Croat ruling caste as the 'Nordic Slavic-Gothic-Iranian component.'[114] The core Croatian component thus consisted of an ethnic mixture, but one that was racially uniform in the sense that it was of a common Aryan-Nordic origin.

In his introduction to Pilar's 'South Slav Question', Pucek had noted that the Croats were the product of the 'mixing of various nations and races': they therefore carried the blood of all the peoples that had inhabited the Croatian lands before the arrival of the proto-Croats in the seventh century AD, including 'Celts, Illyrians, Huns, Avars, Romans and Goths.'[115] Furthermore, the original Croats were also not entirely 'homogeneous', but rather,

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113 Ibid.
114 Pucek, 'Introduction', xxvii.
115 Ibid., xxv.

consisted of a 'Slavic majority' led by a less numerous 'warrior stratum of Gothic-Caucasian-Iranian origin.' The Croatian state in the Balkans was 'an organism organised by Gothic-Caucasian Iranians on behalf of Slavic tribes on the territory of the Western Roman Empire.' As Pucek argued, if the influences of Western Christianity and Islam, as well as the dominant Slavic language and common national consciousness, were added to the above ethnic components, then one had all the basic elements that comprised historical Croatdom (*hrvatstvo*).[116] The Croats were 'proud' of their Slavic language and 'for us it is the most beautiful language in the world', but this 'linguistic fact' did not mean that the Croats had to follow a pan-Slavist ideology and policy; it was pointless to argue that the Croats were either 'only Slavs or only Goths', for they were simply Croats.[117]

In contrast to Pucek, some Ustasha ideologists in the NDH maintained that the Croats were not of mixed descent. For example, in his book on the 'Principles of the Croatian Ustasha Movement' from 1942, Danijel Crljen stated that the Croats 'never consisted of various nations', for their 'descent is uniform and did not originate from the merging of various groups.'[118] An article in *Hrvatski narod* in June 1941 similarly argued that the Croats were one of the oldest nations in Europe, for they had 'appeared on the stage of the history of cultured humanity as a specific and already formed ethnic group under its own and present day name as far back as the early Middle Ages', while the other major nations of Europe were at that time still part of the 'common Germanic' or 'common Romanic groups.'[119] Such claims were primarily concerned with asserting the national and ethnic individuality of the Croats and not with the question of the precise anthropological/racial/ethnolinguistic origins of the Croatian people. In other words, the most significant point that Crljen and others were trying to get across was that an ethnic-national group under the Croatian name had existed from the earliest times. As Crljen wrote in his book from 1942, '[the Croats] arrived from their old homeland in their new homeland as an organised national group under the name *Croat* [Crljen's emphasis].'[120]

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[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid., xxv–xxvi.

[118] Danijel Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta', in Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*, 57.

[119] 'Najsvetija dužnost majke: Uz Poglavnikovu zakonsku odredbu', *Hrvatski narod*, 13 June 1941, 6.

[120] Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta', 57.

In his book Crljen also reiterated the argument he had presented in his 1942 article in *Spremnost* (see earlier section), namely, that the 'organised' Croats were able to 'reign over the submissive Slavs', and he derived the Croats' origin from the 'Iranian proto-homeland.'[121] The theory of the leading Iranian (or other non-Slavic) component was presented in numerous other Ustasha publications. An article in the 1942 *Ustasha Annual*, for example, noted that the Croatian ethnic-racial composition consisted primarily of two 'blood' components: the non-Slavic (probably) Iranian and the Slavic.[122] The first component was clearly the 'core' one, because the Iranian element was characterised by a 'fighting spirit' and 'state-building' talents, while the Slavic component was defined by 'peacefulness' (pacifism in other words) and the nature of 'compromise.'[123] The 'clear resolve and continuity of struggle' of leading Croats such as Ante Starčević and Ante Pavelić clearly showed that they belonged to the 'Iranian' component.[124]

As a 1942 article in *Spremnost* penned by Ivo Bogdan explained, the Poglavnik was 'the progeny of the purest Croatian blood', and who, like Ante Starčević, hailed from Dinaric Lika, 'the Croatian Sparta', which 'gives birth to healthy, firm people, heroes and men of character.'[125] The Dalmatian grand county (*župa*) of Cetina was another area that could derive its origins from the old Croatian ruling class. In July 1941, in a speech to a crowd in the county capital of Omiš, the *veliki župan* (county-chief), Ante Luetić, expressed his happiness at being able to speak to the 'men of old stock [*koljenovići*] of the holy blood of Croatian princes.'[126] As the article in the *Ustasha Annual* stated, both the Iranian and Slavic blood components were united within one 'national soul', but it was important that there be balance between the two, for it would be 'fatal' if the Slavic component completely ruled the 'Croatian soul.'[127]

The most detailed articulation of the Iranian theory in the NDH was presented by the historian Stjepan Krizin Sakač. In an article published in 1943, Sakač explained that the Iranian Croats were eventually Slavicised due

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121 Ibid., 67–68.

122 Z. K. 'Hrvatska povijest je proizvod hrvatske narodne duše', *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* (Zagreb: Glavni ustaški stan, 1942), 122.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.

125 Ivo Bogdan, 'Poglavnik—vodja hrvatskog naroda—odvjetak najčišće hrvatske krvi i odraz nepatvorene hrvatske sredine', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, 2.

126 'Skupština ustaškog pokreta velike župe Cetine', *Hrvatski narod*, 22 July 1941, 6.

127 Z. K. 'Hrvatska povijest je proizvod hrvatske narodne duše', 123.

to two main reasons: a) the growing power of the Altaian-Turanian peoples, such as the Huns, who dominated the steppes of southern Russia and Siberia, thereby severing the links between the Iranians of central Europe (including the Croats) and Iran; and b) polygamy, in other words, the fact that the Iranian Croats had many, predominantly Slavic, wives, which meant that Slavic became the main language in Croatian families.[128] In that sense, one could argue that the Croatian language truly was the 'mother tongue.' For example, the eleventh-century Croatian king Petar Krešimir called himself 'King of the Croats', but referred to their language as 'Slavic.'[129]

In a further, longer, article from 1943, Sakač argued that the Croatian name (and by association, the ethnolinguistic origins of the Croatian people) could be traced to ancient Iran, or more precisely, to the Iranian province of Harahvatiš (Greek: Arachosia) in present day southern Afghanistan.[130] At first a geographical name, 'Harahvati' or 'Harahvaiti,' from which the name 'Croat' ('Hrvat') was derived, came to denote 'those Aryan or Iranian clans and tribes' that lived in the province of Harahvatiš.[131] The region of Harahvatiš was, Sakač wrote, a land of great beauty, covered with great lakes and rivers (the word 'harahvat' means 'rich with lakes'), and none other than the supreme Old Iranian deity Ahura Mazda Himself had described it as beautiful in the Avesta.[132] According to Sakač, there could no longer be any doubt as to the 'Iranian origin of the Croatian ethnic name, its bearers and the main core of the later Slavic people of White Croats and the present day Croats.'[133] He argued that many aspects of Croatian culture and history had their origins in ancient Iran: Old Croatian art, religious customs, the title of 'Ban', the traditional Croatian cavalry, Croatian tribal organisation and numerous personal and geographical names. Therefore, Sakač concluded, 'the Slavic Croats will understand themselves and their history, and their language and a considerable part

[128] Stjepan Krizin Sakač, 'Tragovi staroiranske filozofije kod Hrvata', *Život*, 24, No. 1 (1943): 3fn, 9–10.
[129] Ibid., 3fn, 10.
[130] Sakač's article was first published in the *Ustasha Annual* for 1943, but I have relied on the 1944 publication of the same article in another Ustasha journal. See Stjepan Sakač, 'Historijski razvoj imena "Hrvat" od Darija I. do Konstantina Porfirogeneta (522. pr. Kr. do 959. posl. Kr.), *Hrvatska na novom putu* (Zagreb: Nakladna knjižara Velebit, 1944), 55–74.
[131] Ibid., 71–72.
[132] Ibid., 71–72, 74.
[133] Ibid., 71.

of their present times, at the same time they thoroughly research the past of their Old Iranian ancestors. "Blood is thicker than water!"'[134]

In his 1944 book entitled 'The State Policy of Croatian Rulers', the historian and Ustasha ideologist Fr. Ivo Guberina (1897–1945) not only accepted Sakač's theory on the Old Iranian origins of the Croats, but also argued that the Croats were not completely Slavicised until they reached the Adriatic, and had therefore settled in Dalmatia as ethnic Iranians.[135] The Adriatic Croats kept alive their Iranian cultural heritage by giving the geographical names 'White' and 'Red' Croatia to their new homeland, thereby expressing the 'consciousness of the communality of the whole of Croatdom and its unique origin from Harahvatiš to Split and Bar.'[136] In the seventh century AD, as Guberina remarked, the proto-Croats of White Croatia had been a state-building and cultured people: the Croats were 'no barbarians, but a cultured element, an element of order and statehood, by which they rose high above all their other neighbours in the north at that time, particularly the Slavic masses.'[137] The original Iranian Croats were eventually assimilated 'physiologically' by the Slavs, but their soul or 'psyche' remained uniquely Iranian-Croatian.[138] Accordingly, the Slavicised Iranian Croats accepted the high Latin-Catholic culture of Roman Split rather than the Slavic-Byzantine tradition of the East.[139]

According to the writer Tresić Pavičić (in his book from 1942), 'modern discoveries prove that the Croats were, according to their proto-homeland, Iranians (Persians)'; the Slavicised 'heroic tribe of Croats' from White Croatia were thus of 'Aryan descent' as they derived their ancestry from 'Iranian Persians.'[140] The Croats, who had 'enjoyed the mild climate of the Persian Gulf or the north Indian Ocean' in their Iranian 'proto-homeland', had felt 'an atavistic yearning for the sea' that eventually brought them to the shores of the Adriatic. The Croats arrived in their new homeland organised as a 'military caste' and subsequently 'cleansed' the western Balkans of the Avars.[141]

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134 Ibid.
135 Ivo Guberina, *Državna politika hrvatskih vladara* (Zagreb: Nakladna knjižara Velebit, 1944), 32–36.
136 Ibid., 10.
137 Ibid., 8, 20.
138 Ibid., 186–187.
139 Ibid., 50–64, 146–155, 186–188.
140 Tresić-Pavičić, *Izgon Mongola iz Hrvatske*, 14, 30.
141 Ibid., 14.

Not all proponents of the Iranian theory in the NDH traced the ethnolinguistic roots of the Croats to ancient Iran itself. An article in *Novi list* from May 1941 derived Croat origins from the Indo-Iranian tribes of the Caucasus region, explaining as follows:

> The appearance of the first monuments of the Croatian name in the area of Iranian tribes instructs us that the Croats are also a part of the Iranian community of peoples . . . the Croatian name and the Croatian nation have a separate origin and position amongst the remaining Slavic peoples.[142]

In a section on the 'Arrival of the Croats' in an encyclopaedia from 1942, one of Croatia's most prominent historians, Lovre Katić (1887–1961), wrote that the old Croats were 'a branch of the Iranians and lived in the western Caucasus.' In their vicinity lived the Antes, 'their kin and also of Iranian blood.'[143] The Iranian Croats became masters of the land and the Slavic population between the Carpathians and the Vistula and Bug Rivers; as the ruling Croats were less numerous than their Slavic subjects the former were eventually Slavicised.[144] In a chapter on Croatian military history in 'Our Homeland' (1943), Slavko Pavičić and Franjo Perše argued that the 'traces of Croatdom lead to the Caucasus', where the *prahrvati* (proto-Croats) 'appear as an eminently military and state-building people.'[145]

Other intellectuals and ideologists in the NDH emphasised the leading role of the Nordic-Germanic component in Croatian racial history. In an article in the German-language Ustasha newspaper *Neue Ordnung* from May 1942, Božidar Murgić argued that 'the ancient autochthonous culture' of the Croats came from the 'high north' and was related to the *urgermanisch-nordische Kultur* ('original Germanic-Nordic culture').[146] Basing his argument upon the work of Josef Strzygowski, Murgić stated that, even in their 'southern homeland' along the 'blue Adriatic', the Croats 'have remained a Nordic people', as they had retained 'their Nordic soul, their Nordic bravery . . . their honour and their Nordic art.' Accordingly, the historical 'cultural connections' between Croats and Germans were based on a 'blood relationship.'[147] Mirko Kus-Nikolajev was also partial to

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[142] 'Sveto ime Hrvat ne može se zamijeniti nikakvim drugim imenom', *Novi list*, 22 May 1941, 5.

[143] Lovro Katić, 'Dolazak Hrvata', in Horvat ed. *Znanje i radost: Enciklopedijski zbornik*, 33.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Slavko Pavičić and Franjo Perše, ‚Hrvatska vojna poviest', in Lukas ed. *Naša domovina*, Chapter XI, Vol. 1, 186.

[146] Božidar Murgić, 'Die Kulturbeziehungen des kroatischen und deutschen Volkes', *Neue Ordnung*, 26 May 1942, 13.

[147] Ibid.

Strzygowski's theory on the Nordic origin of the plaitwork of Old Croatian art.[148] Kus-Nikolajev theorised that this type of art could have been brought to Croatia by peoples of Nordic race, such as the Celts, and was subsequently revived 'under the influence' of the Nordic Iranian Croats.[149] In 1943 the Croat art historian Ljubo Karaman (1886–1971) argued that the Croats, a 'Slavicised warrior tribe', received the art of plaitwork sculpture from northeastern (Lombard) Italy. The Croats had quickly adopted this art, 'which corresponded . . . to their artistic abilities and their innate ability, like all primitive peoples from the North, for simple ornamental decoration of surfaces.'[150]

In a chapter on Croatian history in *Die Kroaten* (1942), Josip Horvat argued that both the Gothic and Iranian elements were found in the Croatian *Herrenschicht*: together, these two components of warriors and conquerors formed the ruling class of a population of 'Slavic agriculturalists' north of the Carpathians.[151] The Croat ethnic name itself was of Iranian origin (from 'Hu-urvatha'). The Iranian Croats originated from the Caucasus, which was 'the venerable mother-soil of the most able European races.'[152] The Hu-urvathi also lived in close contact with the Germanic Goths with whom they interbred. Horvat relied upon the authority of the English historian H. M. Chadwick (1870–1947), who postulated that Scandinavia and northern Germany had formed the cradle of a *Herrenschicht* that ruled over Europe for two thousand years; the Goths had formed one of the branches of this ruling class.[153] According to Horvat, Chadwick's argument reinforced the theory of 'the Gothic origin of the Croats' because the Croats had shared the same living space with the Goths, shared similar personal names (e.g. Gothic leaders were named Filimer, Viscimir, Theodemir, the leaders of the Croats, Branimir, Zvonimir, Trpimir and so

148 Kus-Nikolajev, 'Nordijsko podrietlo starohrvatskog pletenca', 7.

149 Ibid.

150 Ljubo Karaman, *Živa starina: Petdeset slika iz vremena hrvatskih narodnih vladara* (Zagreb: Izdanje hrvatskog izdavalačkog bibliografskog zavoda, 1943), 78. In the interwar period Karaman had hypothesised that Old Croatian art and architecture was of Lombard origin; he strongly criticised Strzygowsky's 'Barbarian' Nordic thesis. At the same time, Karaman also derived the ethnolinguistic origins of the Croats from 'the North.' The prehistoric Slavs, for example, had burnt their dead in the same way as 'the other Aryan peoples.' The history of medieval Croatian Dalmatia was marked by the 'symbiosis of Slavic blood and culture with Western, Latin civilisation.' See Karaman, *Živa starina*, 26, 119. For more on Karaman, see Ivančević, 'The Pre-Romanesque in Croatia', 420–429.

151 Josip Horvath (Horvat), 'Kroatiens Werdegang' in Clemens Diederich ed. *Die Kroaten* (Zagreb: Verlagsbuchhandlung Velebit, 1942), 67–71.

152 Ibid., 67.

153 Ibid., 69–70.

on) and some researchers had pointed to the similarity between the old Croatian Glagolitic script and Gothic runes.[154] The Iranian-Gothic Croats, Horvat noted, gradually accepted the Slavic language of their subjects in White Croatia and in Dalmatia, especially as the mobile Iranian-Gothic warriors were forced to take Slavic wives.[155] In his 1943 article on Croat cultural ability in *Spremnost* Ivan Krajač argued that the 'old Croats' who conquered Dalmatia and Pannonia had assimilated their 'kin by language, the Slavic Wends', and had also received

> the first class racial components of the Goths and old Illyrians, which could only strengthen even more their blood quality and national traits from a martial and from an organisational point of view . . . during this time, the Goths are a capable noble nation, while the Illyrians are a strong, heroic, highland and maritime nation.[156]

Filip Lukas, for his part, also stressed the important role of the Goths in early Croatian ethnogenesis. According to Lukas' 1942 study on Bosnian geography and history, it was certain that Gothic remnants in the western Balkans had interbred with the Slavic Croat settlers.[157] The fact that the Croats were the first Slavic people to organise a state could very well be explained by the presence of descendants of the Goths among the Croats, for the Germanic Goths were a 'state-building element.'[158] Lukas also remarked on the similarity between the names of Ostrogothic and Croatian rulers (i.e. names ending with the suffix *–mir*). This linguistic similarity suggested some sort of 'ethnic kinship' between the Goths and Croats (by way of intermarriage) or, at least, 'a strong political-dynastic merging' between the Gothic and Croatian ruling elites.[159] In the revised 1944 edition of his interwar essay, 'The Problem of Croatian Culture, Lukas also remarked that the theory of the Iranian-Caucasian origin of the proto-Croats was 'more than hypothetical.'[160]

It should be pointed out that not all Croatian historians in the NDH unreservedly accepted either the Iranian or Gothic theory of Croat origins. Nonetheless, these historians still tended to distinguish the state-building

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[154] Ibid., 70.
[155] Ibid., 71–72.
[156] Ivan Krajač, 'Kulturna sposobnost Hrvata', *Spremnost*, 6 June 1943, 9.
[157] Lukas, 'Bosna i Hercegovina u geopolitičkom pogledu', 67.
[158] Ibid., 66–67.
[159] Ibid., 67. Also see Lukas, 'Zemljopisni i geopolitički položaj', 25.
[160] 'Problem hrvatske kulture' in Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao*, 1fn 47–48.

proto-Croats from other Slavs in an ethnic-racial sense. For example, in a secondary school textbook on Croatian history from 1941, Živko Jakić pointed out that the White Croats were 'not of pure Slavic race and therefore had more capability for creating a state than the other remaining Slavs.'[161] In his chapter on Croatian history in 'Our Homeland' (1943) Lovre Katić also did not specify to which ethnolinguistic group the White Croats belonged (in contrast to his encyclopaedia article a year earlier). He still asserted, however, that north of the Carpathians,

> the Croats acquired a Slavic language from their subjects and they subjugated even more Slavs in their new homeland. That was during the third decade of the seventh century. The Croats are masters of the land, while the vanquished Slavs and Romans [together] with the Illyrians cultivate the land for them.[162]

Similarly, in his chapter on the Croatian nobility in 'Our Homeland', the Croatian herald and historian, Viktor Antun Dujšin, remarked that having 'arrived in the south as warriors and conquerors', the Croats (whose specific ethnolinguistic origin he did not note) were able to impose their aristocratic rule over the subjugated Slavs and Romans.[163]

Although it was a matter of academic uncertainty as to whether the proto-Croats were of Iranian or Gothic (or some other Indo-European) origin, there was a general intellectual and ideological consensus in the NDH that the proto-Croats had been a conquering and warrior Aryan people containing an important non-Slavic ethnic element. This non-Slavic component was able to assimilate the Slavs, Illyrians, Romans, Goths and others and impress its ruling stamp on the soul of the mass of Slavic-speaking Croats. As Ivo Bogdan argued in an article in *Spremnost* from April 1942, there was simply no such thing as a distinct and single Slavic race, ethnicity or culture; the Croats were clearly 'a nation of the Slavic language group', but their racial origins were quite distinct from the origins of other Slavic peoples.[164] In an interview he gave to a German newspaper in May 1941, the Poglavnik remarked that the martial nature of the Croats was 'evidence that the old primordial Croatian blood is still, 1300

[161] Cited in Jareb, 'Jesu li Hrvati postali Goti?', 880.
[162] Lovre Katić, 'Obća poviest Hrvata', in Lukas ed. *Naša domovina*, Chapter XI, Vol. 1, 166.
[163] Viktor Antun Dujšin, 'Poviest hrvatskog plemstva i heraldika', in Lukas ed. *Naša domovina*, Chapter XI, Vol. 1, 205.
[164] Ivo Bogdan, '"Slavenski kongres" u Moskvi', *Spremnost*, 26 April 1942, 1.

years after the arrival in our present day homeland, the dominant factor in the physical and spiritual structure of the Croatian people.'[165]

In 1944 the German Scientific Institute in Zagreb (*Deutsches Wissenschaftliches Institut Agram*) planned to conduct excavations in Croatia in order to research the origins of the Croats with 'particular attention' devoted to the question of 'Nordic migrations.'[166] The Nazi Party Chancellery in Berlin was informed that 'favourable preconditions' existed for the start of research activities in view of the fact that Croatian historiography advocated, in the first place, the thesis of the 'Iranian-Caucasian origin of the Croats', followed by the theory of the 'Gothic origin of the ruling class [*Herrscherschicht*] of the Croats', while the 'pure Slavic theory still plays a very considerable role in the background.' The excavations were to disregard 'Mediterranean finds.'[167] In other words, the archaeological digs were to concentrate on the Nordic (Iranian-Gothic-Slavic) origins of the Croats in the north of Europe.

The Croats of Catholic and Islamic Faith

The Islamic population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was considered to be of particularly valuable Nordic-Dinaric racial stock. The Ustasha regime wholeheartedly adopted the Islamophilia of Starčevićist political tradition and turned it into one of the guiding ideological principles of the NDH. On the day he proclaimed the NDH Slavko Kvaternik sent a separate appeal to his 'brother Muslims,' in which he called upon them to see in the Poglavnik 'the greatest pledge for the happy and secure future of Islam and Croatdom in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for he faithfully keeps the vow of the father of the homeland dr. Ante Starčević, who saw in you Muslims the best part of the Croatian people . . .'[168] The Ustasha regime imagined the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims as the NDH's decisive link to the Islamic Orient. As racial, and not religious, identity was the most important

[165] Pavelić made the above comments to the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*. See 'Temelji, na kojima se izgrađuje nova Hrvatska', *Novi list*, 8 May 1941, 6.

[166] See the report of Dr. Ernst Achenbach to the *Partei-Kanzlei* on 27 February 1944 in Frank-Rutger Hausmann, *"Auch im Krieg schweigen die Musen nicht": Die Deutschen Wissenschaftlichen Institute im Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002, 320.

[167] Ibid.

[168] 'Proglasi zamjenika Poglavnika S. Kvaternika', in Petar Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*, 135.

factor of Croat nationhood in the NDH, Islam was readily accepted as another religious faith of the Croatian people.

At an Ustasha political rally in the northern town of Slavonski Brod in mid June 1941, Mile Budak (at that time Minister for Religious Affairs and Education) stated that 'we are a people of Catholic and Muslim faith', and this religious dualism was 'the bearer of Croatian statehood.'[169] Budak further remarked that Croatian Muslims and Catholics had to work together to secure the Drina River boundary separating the NDH from Serbia. Budak reminded Catholic Croats that 'Turkey' no longer existed on the other side of the Sava River (separating Slavonia from Bosnia), while he reminded Muslim Croats that there were no longer any 'infidels' on the northern side: both groups would find only the 'purest Croatian blood' on either side.[170] In a speech to the Croatian *Sabor* on 28 February 1942 the Poglavnik remarked that foreigners often asked him about the 'Muslim question' in the NDH, which he denied existed:

> No, we do not have a Muslim question. States, which have colonies, have a Muslim question. In these colonies there are peoples of Muslim faith, which are not of the same blood and body as the people in the mother country. The Muslim blood of our Muslims is Croatian blood. It is a Croatian faith, for in our land its members are Croatian sons.[171]

In order to highlight the important place of Islam in the NDH Pavelić authorised the building of a mosque in the centre of Zagreb, which was completed and opened in August 1944 as 'The Poglavnik's Mosque' (*Poglavnikova džamija*). This was not a mere exercise in propaganda; Pavelić's action 'angered both Catholics and art-lovers',[172] for the Poglavnik had not only chosen to erect a mosque in the centre of a predominantly Catholic city (that was never conquered by the Ottoman Turks), but also chose to convert the interwar art gallery constructed by the Yugoslavist Croat artist Ivan Meštrović into the new mosque. It was erected by the Poglavnik so that 'the faithful sons of the chivalrous Croatian people, the sincere followers of the exalted faith of Islam', would be able to fortify through prayer, 'their dedicated strength in the defence and progress of their beautiful homeland, the Independent State of Croatia.'[173] According

[169] 'Poglavnik je uvijek imao pravo, on će urediti ovu državu', *Hrvatski narod*, 16 June 1941, 16.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Pavelić cited in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, 91.
[172] Jelinek, 'Nationalities and Minorities in the Independent State of Croatia', 202.
[173] Cited in Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 295.

to the Ustasha press the opening of the Poglavnik's Mosque signified the 'symbolic and deep connection of Islam with the Croatian race.'[174]

As an article in *Novi list* stated, the Muslims were authentically Croatian according to their 'blood, language and history.'[175] Unlike their co-religionists in Macedonia, who were of 'Turkish or Albanian nationality', the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims belonged to the 'branch of the linguistic tree that is called the Croatian nation'; the majority of Muslims spoke the Croatian *ikavian* subdialect. Furthermore, anthropological research had established that, in contrast to the predominantly dark-skinned Serbs, the Muslims were, as typical Croats, largely of 'fairer type' (*svjetliji tip*), characterised by fair skin, fair or at least brown hair and blue or at least brown (i.e. not very dark) eyes. The article noted that many Bosnian born Ottoman pashas and viziers had proudly proclaimed their Croatian origin by adding 'Hrvat' ('Croat') to their names (e.g. Rustem-paša Hrvat).[176] According to an essay by Ćiro Truhelka published in 1941, the 'Aryan blood' of the South Slavs had rejuvenated the 'Turanian blood' of the Ottoman Turkish conquerors through the influence of the large number of high-ranking Ottoman officials of Bosnian-Croatian (and other South Slav) descent.[177]

The high number of Bosnian Croats in the highest levels of Ottoman government could be explained by the aristocratic heritage of the ruling elite of Ottoman Bosnia. As Pavelić himself wrote in an article for *Hrvatski narod* in February 1942, the Ottoman authorities granted the Islamicised Bosnian nobles (who made up a significant part of the population) the right to keep their aristocratic privileges and titles, now replaced by the Turkish titles 'beg' and 'aga.'[178] Even today, Pavelić noted, 'almost every tenth Muslim in Bosnia has the title of beg or aga.' In contrast, the Turks never possessed a hereditary aristocracy.[179] In line with Starčević's theory, the Ustashe argued that the European aristocratic heritage of the Croatian Muslims had always kept them apart from the Ottoman Turks. An article in *Hrvatski narod*, in August 1941, noted that the 'spirit of the West' had brought the Muslims into conflict with the Ottoman court because they

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[174] Ibid., 296.

[175] 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana: Zvjerstva Srba nad muslimanima, *Novi list*, 8 May 1941, 7.

[176] Ibid.

[177] 'O podrijetlu žiteljstva grčkoistočne vjeroispovijesti u Bosni i Hercegovini' in Ćiro Truhelka, *Studije o podrijetlu: Etnološka razmatranja iz Bosne i Hercegovine* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1941), 30.

[178] Ante Pavelić, 'Pojam Bosne kroz stoljeća', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 February 1942, 2.

[179] Ibid.

had 'preserved the pure Croatian blood and Croatian pride, and jealously protected the rights of the Croatian state people of Bosnia-Herzegovina from the encroachments of the Porte of Constantinople.'[180]

The Croat Muslim Orientalist Hazim Šabanović (1916–1971) similarly stressed the political and organisational skills of the Bosnian Muslims in his article in *Neue Ordnung* from February 1942. Šabanović argued that 'the Islamic part of our people carried the reputation of its noble Croatian name far throughout the world, especially in the East.'[181] The Croatian Muslims had thus played 'an important role in all Eastern empires, especially in the Arabian Empire in Spain and in the Ottoman [Empire].' Indeed, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Croats played the 'leading role' during the period of the Ottoman Empire's greatest power and glory. The 'racial strength' of the Muslim Croats was so great that not only did they manage to preserve 'the purity of our soul, our blood and our language', but they had also managed to 'force' their own attributes and qualities on to others: for example, 'the Croatian influence in Constantinople was so strong' that the Croatian language became the second official language of the Porte.[182]

Croatian intellectuals and Ustasha ideologists celebrated Croatia's religious and cultural Catholic-Islamic dualism. In 1943 Stjepan Ratković argued that, while Croatian culture was a small one, it had a 'significant cultural mission in the meeting of East and West, Christianity and Islam.'[183] Croatia was home to 'two great religions and two very different and rich cultures', which not only influenced each other but also came together in an organic 'symbiosis.'[184] The universal influence of Arab Islamic civilisation mirrored the universal importance of Latin Catholicism. In an article in the 'Croatian Annual' for 1944, Milivoj Karamarko remarked that 'our Croatdom is synthetic and universal, and not closed, narrow and uniform like [Serbian Orthodoxy].'[185] As he explained, 'the universal character of religions did not diminish or negate' the Croatdom of the Catholic or Islamic Croats, and while these religions 'are not national, they are

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[180] 'Zavjet Stjepana Radića', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 August 1941, 3.

[181] Hazim Šabanović, 'Die muselmanischen Kroaten und der kroatische Staat', *Neue Ordnung*, 8 February 1942, 5.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Cited in Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 282.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Milivoj Karamarko, 'Suvremeni sveučilištni podmladak', *Hrvatski godišnjak* (Nakladna knjižara Velebit: Zagreb, 1944), 81.

Croatian' and 'everything that is Croatian is equally sacred.'[186] The Croats had thus adopted the values and customs of both Catholic and Islamic civilisations, but in doing so they had also managed to preserve their original cultural spirit and racial essence. Karamarko argued that Croatian 'religious, cultural and territorial peculiarities and traditions' had been merged together, and 'consciousness, blood and soil shaped one soul.'[187]

To be sure, many Ustasha ideologists and intellectuals regularly stressed the historic Croatian role of defending Western European civilisation. Among others, Ivan Krajač argued in 1943 that the Croats had always possessed an 'instinctual aversion' toward any 'anti-European aspirations from the Orient', regardless of whether the 'bearers' of these attacks from the East had been 'Avars, Saracens, Byzantium, Mongols, the old national Ottomans, or exclusive Orthodoxy, Jewry, old Masonry, Marxism and Bolshevism.'[188] Significantly, however, Krajač had not included Islam among the historic enemies from the East; he referred specifically to the Ottoman Turks. For Ustasha ideologists, Islam was a world religion worthy of respect and was separate from the actual nomadic, racially Asiatic or Near Eastern hordes which represented the real historical, and present, threat to Croatian culture and European civilisation. In Ustasha eyes, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims were European-Aryans according to their Nordic-Dinaric blood, Slavic-Croatian language and aristocratic Croatian heritage.

National Socialist Race Theory and the Croats

The NDH's ideal Nordic-Dinaric racial type became a sort of ideological counterpart to the ideal Nordic type in the German Reich. As this book has clearly shown, the racial idea in the NDH was the ideological and intellectual product of a long racial discourse that revolved around the dialectic of the competing racial theories of Yugoslavism, Greater Serbianism and anti-Yugoslavist Croatian nationalism. Therefore, Ustasha racial theory was not the product, or the consequence, of the alliance with National Socialist Germany, as has hitherto been argued by historians of the NDH. One can certainly speak of strong similarities between Nazi and Ustasha racial ideas but one cannot reduce Ustasha racial ideology to a

[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Cited in Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam*, 271.

mere question of Nazi ideological influence and/or a practical accommodation to German political power on the part of the Ustasha regime.

In reality it was the Nazis who accepted the basic tenets of Ustasha racial ideology, at least with regard to the question of the racial identity of the Croatian people. Adolf Hitler himself made this clear during his first meeting with Ante Pavelić at the Berghof on 6 June 1941. At this meeting the Poglavnik claimed that the Croats 'were descended from the Goths, and the Pan-Slavic idea had been forced upon them as something artificial,' to which

> The Führer replied that there was of course no uniform Slavic race, as the obvious difference between Poles, Czechs, Dalmatians, etc., clearly showed, whereas on the other hand the Germanic peoples, as for example embodied in the Germans and the English, presented an absolutely uniform picture.[189]

To be sure, Pavelić himself had personally used the Gothic theory of Croat origins in conversation with Hitler in order to bolster his political standing in the eyes of Berlin, which had initially been reluctant to support Pavelić's installation as leader of the NDH because he had been an Italian political protégé.[190] By claiming a Germanic-Gothic origin for the Croats Pavelić hoped to convince the Nazis of his own pro-German sentiments.

In any case, Hitler had come to his own conclusions on the question of the Croats' racial identity. In a meeting on 14 April 1941 with General Edmund Glaise von Horstenau before his departure to Zagreb, Hitler commented that, although Croatia belonged to the Italian 'sphere of interest', the Croats were 'racially much, much better than their western neighbours [i.e. the Italians].'[191] When Glaise joked to the Führer, at a second meeting on 17 April, that the Croats were trying to 'appoint' themselves *Germanen*, Hitler replied in a serious tone that there indeed existed real racial differences between the Croats and Serbs, because the 'racial foundations' of the Croats were different to those of the 'Oriental race.' Hitler felt that this racial difference was 'a guarantee for the permanent cleft' between the Croats and Serbs.[192] Hitler made similar remarks to a private audience

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[189] Vol. XII, 'The War Years, February 1–June 22, 1941' in Series D (1937–1945), in *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918–1945* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 980.

[190] For more on German attitudes to Pavelić and the Ustashe in April 1941, see Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 45.

[191] Peter Broucek ed. *Ein General im Zwielicht: Die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaises von Horstenau*, Band 3: Deutscher Bevollmächtigter General in Kroatien und Zeuge des Untergangs des "Tausendjährigen Reiches" (Wien-Köln-Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1988), 82.

[192] Ibid., 89.

in July 1941 when he argued that 'the Croats are certainly more Germanic than Slav.'[193] As Hitler explained, 'language is not the immovable monument on which a people's characteristics are inscribed . . . In the time of the great migrations, the tribes were the product of ceaseless mixtures. The men who arrived in the South were not the same as those who went away.'[194]

The Führer's theory on Croat racial identity reflected one of the basic tenets of racial anthropology, namely, the clear distinction between linguistic and racial identity. Hitler had accepted the universal anthropological view that there was no such race as 'Slavs.'[195] In November 1940 a report written by the SS intelligence service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, SD) explained the proper use of the term 'Slav':

> The term "Slav" comes from linguistics. The racial picture corresponds to linguistic affinities to a far lesser extent than is the case with Germanic peoples. Ukrainians and Poles, Bulgarians and Croats, Russians and Czechs are so different in a racial sense, that they cannot be understood as a common racial unit . . .[196]

During a private dinner in May 1942 Hitler spoke of the different racial types among the 'Slavs', pointing out that it was 'complete nonsense to call the Bulgarians Slavs, because they are of Turkic origin.' In reference to the Croats, Hitler argued that 'the so-called Southern Slavs are almost entirely Dinarian. For that reason the germanization of the Croats would be welcome from the racial point of view. . .'[197] This 'Germanisation' was theoretically possible for a sizeable percentage of the south German

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[193] *Hitler's Table Talk 1941–1944*. Trans. Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953), 8.

[194] Ibid. In October 1941, Hitler also stated the following: 'If the Croats were part of the Reich, we'd have them serving as faithful auxiliaries of the German Fuehrer, to police our marshes. Whatever happens, one shouldn't treat them as Italy is doing at present. The Croats are a proud people. They should be bound directly to the Fuehrer by an oath of loyalty. Like that, one could rely upon them absolutely. When I have [Slavko] Kvaternik standing in front of me, I behold the very type of the Croat as I've always known him, unshakeable in his friendships, a man whose oath is eternally binding. The Croats are very keen on not being regarded as Slavs. According to them, they're descended from the Goths. The fact that they speak a Slav language is only an accident, they say.' See ibid., 95.

[195] Connelly, 'Nazis and Slavs', 16.

[196] Ibid., 82fn, 17.

[197] Hitler added, however, that, 'from the political point of view', the Germanisation of the Croats was 'out of the question' because the NDH was formally within the Italian sphere of influence (until September 1943). Cited in ibid., 17. For a slightly different translation of Hitler's thoughts on this topic, see *Hitler's Table Talk*, 473.

population in Bavaria and Austria was also classified as Dinaric by German racial anthropologists.[198]

German academics and writers also shared Hitler's positive evaluation of the racial identity and origins of the Croats. In a booklet published in 1942, the historian and director of the *Institut für Grenz- und Auslandsstudien*, Karl Christian von Loesch (1880–1951), described the Croats as a 'warrior and seafaring people of Slavic tongue and Gothic heart'; the Croatian people had thus been formed upon a 'Germanic-Slavic racial foundation.'[199] Loesch specifically noted that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims were of Nordic-Dinaric racial heritage, with their 'tall figures and blond hair.'[200] Mladen Lorković was appointed a honorary member of Loesch's institute in May 1942, while his book, 'The Nation and Land of the Croats', was translated into German.[201] In a book on Croatian history from 1942 Walter Schneefuss remarked that every German who had met a Croat in his own land would recognise the 'blond, tall, clean' Croats as 'close relatives' belonging to his own type or kind (*Art*).[202] Schneefuss was partial to the Gothic theory of Croat origins, but noted that Croatian historians themselves located the proto-homeland of their people in the Caucasus and derived the Croatian ethnic name from an Iranian source.[203] In his 1944 study of Croatian history Emil Robert Gärtner argued that the 'racial genotype' separated the 'Nordic-Dinaric' Croats from the 'Near Eastern-Eastern [Alpine]' Serbs.[204]

To the National Socialists it mattered little as to whether the Croats were specifically of Gothic or Iranian (or some other Indo-European) descent. As Karl C. von Loesch had noted in his text from 1942, the question of how far modern historical research was ready to verify the theory of the 'Gothic leading stratum' (*gotische Führungsschicht*) of the first Croatian

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198 Günther estimated that 15–20% of the Germans belonged to the Dinaric race. See Fritz Brennecke ed. *The Nazi Primer: Official Handbook for Schooling the Hitler Youth*. Trans. Harwood L. Childs (1938: reprint, New York: Ams Press Inc., 1966), 33–34.

199 Karl C. von Loesch, *Croatia restituta* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni tiskarski zavod, 1942), 9, 24–25.

200 Ibid, p. 11. In November 1941 Hitler had privately noted that 'here and there one meets amongst the Arabs men with fair hair and blue eyes. They're the descendants of the Vandals who occupied North Africa. The same phenomenon in Castille and Croatia. The blood doesn't disappear.' See *Hitler's Table Talk*, 110.

201 Kisić Kolanović, *Mladen Lorković*, 58.

202 Walter Schneefuss, *Die Kroaten und ihre Geschichte* (Leipzig: "Weltgeschehen", 1942), 8.

203 Ibid., 8–9.

204 Emil Robert Gärtner, *Kroatien in Südslawien* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt Verlag, 1944), 7.

state was 'politically unimportant.' What was 'decisive', Loesch explained, was the fact that the belief in a Gothic origin lived in the people and had given the Croats strength in the struggle against pan-Slavism and Serbian Yugoslavism.[205] The NDH itself was the 'warrior state' (*Kriegerstaat*) of the Croatian people, fighting the forces of 'pan-Slavism, Yugoslavism and Orientalism.'[206]

The Third Reich regarded the Croats to be of particularly good racial stock (even if they were obviously not *Germanen*), especially in comparison to most other south-east and east Europeans. Accordingly, in late June 1941 the Führer approved the selection of up to one hundred young Croats between the ages of eighteen and twenty, and who were of strong character and intelligence, for training with the SS in Germany. The NDH's ambassador in Berlin, Branko Benzon (1903–1970), informed the Poglavnik that 'particular discretion' was needed in this matter in relation to other Axis countries, since 'this is in general the first time that [the SS] has accepted members of a foreign nationality into its service for training.'[207] Furthermore, SS-Untersturmführer Herbert Scheiber arrived in Zagreb at the end of 1941 to assist in the training of the elite 'Poglavnik's Bodyguard' brigade (*Poglavnikov tjelesni sdrug*, PTS). For his services, Scheiber received NDH citizenship, along with the Croatian surname of Grodić, and became an Ustasha officer.[208]

The preceding examination of Nazi attitudes toward the Croats demonstrates that one should be very cautious in arguing that the Croats were to be 'condemned', as Slavs, to the status of 'a mass of nameless work slaves' in the 'New European Order.'[209] Rather, one could well argue that the Croats possessed the status of Aryan *perioeci* (or *perioikoi*) in the German New Order. The Nazi academics, civil servants and economists, who were given

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[205] Loesch, *Croatia restituta*, 10.

[206] Ibid., 24–25.

[207] Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, 171–172. The strongly pro-Ustasha German ambassador to Croatia, Siegfried Kasche, was opposed to the selection of the young Croats for the SS on the grounds that the Croats 'are not a Germanic people' and therefore a close relationship between the Germanic SS and the Ustashe was not particularly suitable. See Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, p. 71. In reality, Kasche's opposition to the SS recruitment of Croats probably stemmed mainly from his 'longstanding feud' with Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler. Kasche was a member of the Nazi SA (*Sturmabteilung*), the leadership of which was murdered by the SS on the 'Night of the Long Knives' in 1934. Kasche was thus keen to keep Pavelić away from the influence of the SS. See Mazower, *Hitler's Empire*, 347–348 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 325.

[208] Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 71–72.

[209] See Anna-Maria Gruenfelder, *U radni stroj velikoga njemačkog Reicha!: Prisilni radnici i radnice iz Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2007), 24.

the task of planning the German post-war political structure of eastern Europe, used the social organisation of ancient Sparta as a socio-political model; for example, a meeting of participants of the 'General Plan for the East' in the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, on 4 February 1942, made the following analogy: 'The Germans will be the Spartans, the middle class, consisting of Letts, Estonians, etc., will be the *perioikoi*, while the Russians will be the helots.'[210] Although Croatia did not belong to the area of German *Lebensraum* in the East, the Croats did seem to fall, similarly to Latvians and Estonians, somewhere in the 'middle class' of European nations. The Croats clearly did not belong to the upper layer of northern Germanic nations, but, in Nazi eyes, they stood racially far above the Mongol-Slav helots or *Untermenschen* of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. If the Croats were indeed considered 'racially inferior' in the Third Reich, as some historians have asserted or implied, then one could logically ask how it was possible that the Croatian police attaché in Berlin, Branko Buzjak (1912–?), was able to marry the German actress Charlotte Thiele (1918–2004) with the head of the SS main office, SS-Gruppenführer Gottlob Berger (1896–1975), attending as his best man? The simple answer is that Buzjak was a completely acceptable Aryan for the authorities of the Third Reich.[211]

One should add that the NDH's race theorists had a more positive attitude toward the question of racial hybridity in comparison to National Socialist race theorists, who generally held a strongly Nordicist position, which limited all the great cultural and political achievements of the Indo-European peoples exclusively to the role of the Nordic race. A number of German racial anthropologists, such as Eugen Fischer, adopted a more cautious intellectual approach which, though recognising the significant role of the Nordic race, also stressed the contributions of other races to European history and culture, particularly the Dinaric (to be sure, even Nordicist theorists such as Hans Günther had recognised the marked cultural abilities of mixed Nordic-Dinaric individuals).[212] Indeed, according to Walter Rauschenberger, many great figures of European and world history, such as Plato, Dante, Goethe and Schiller were Nordic-Dinaric.[213]

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[210] Cited in Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 261–262.

[211] See 'Buzjak, Branko' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, 61–62. This entry incorrectly notes the German actress Hertha (and not Charlotte) Thiele as Buzjak's wife.

[212] See Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 113–139.

[213] Ibid., 24.

Boris Zarnik addressed the question of racial hybridity in a section on 'Man in the Biological Sciences' in the 1942 edition of the *Croatian Encyclopaedia*.[214] Zarnik rejected Nordic racism, in other words, the idea that only the Nordic race was capable of cultural creativity and therefore destined to rule the world. On the other hand, he did note that it was 'very probable' that the Nordic race had created, as Gobineau had concluded, the most noticeable aspects of the cultures of the Indo-European peoples. Zarnik was 'certain' that races were distinguished by both physical and spiritual traits, although science lacked exact data on the latter because it was difficult to determine the influence of 'external factors' on spiritual characteristics. Accordingly, science was not in a position to determine the relative worth of different races upon the basis of spiritual racial traits. On the other hand, each person subjectively considered the 'spiritual style' (*duševni stil*) of his or her own race as the most valuable. Referring to Fischer, Ernst Kretschmer and Kurt Gerlach as sources, Zarnik argued there was strong evidence to suggest that mixing between 'some races', notably the Nordic, Alpine and Dinaric races, created the spiritual conditions that led to cultural creativity. The skulls of the greatest German cultural figures, such as Leibniz, Kant, Schopenhauer and Goethe were brachycephalic (actually 'hyperbrachycephalic'). Beethoven had a typical Alpine face with dark hair. Goethe, for his part, had brown hair and eyes and Dinaric facial features.[215]

In contrast to Ustasha race theory, National Socialist race theorists were, in general, uneasy with the idea of the eastern or Asiatic (geographical) origin of the Indo-European peoples. Since the Oriental east was traditionally seen as a threat to European civilisation, it was more fitting to view northern Europe as the authentic homeland of the Indo-Europeans.[216] Although Ustasha race theory often stressed the idea of the north European roots of the proto-Croats, there was also a strong intellectual and ideological tendency to seek the roots of the Croats in the Caucasus and/or ancient Iran. The Ustashe had of course continually stressed the historic Croatian role of defending the West, but alongside such a view there also existed a fascination with the East as well. A clear distinction was made, however, between racial and geographical notions of the East: the

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[214] Boris Zarnik, 'Čovjek', *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, Vol. 4 (Zagreb: Naklada hrvatskog izdavalačkog bibliografskog zavoda, 1942), 355.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, 161.

Croats were thus (according to the Iranian theory) the descendants of the impeccably Aryan Persians.

The Iranian theory of Croat origins, which had gained a respectable following in certain circles of Croatian and European academia, had given Ustasha ethnolinguistic-racial ideology the semblance of a strong intellectual foundation. National Socialist race theorists also held the ancient Iranians in very high regard. An SS journal from July 1943 published a translation of a Persian document, a proclamation issued by Emperor Darius I in the sixth century BC, under the title of, 'An Indogermanic Document.' The explanatory text stated that, in every place, 'where Indogermanics appear on this earth, they enter into history through the creation of states and empires . . .'[217] The Indo-Germanic states were 'filled with the idea of empire [*Reich*]' and this idea belonged to the 'eternal' belief system of 'Aryan mankind.' A clear example of this was Darius, a 'great Iranian ruler' proud of his 'Aryan origin.'[218]

Conclusion

Ustasha race theory emphasised the unique and exceptional nature of Croatian racial identity. Firstly, one of the main, and excellent, European racial types, the Dinaric, had evolved in its purest form on Croatian territory (i.e in the area of the Dinaric Alps). Secondly, the Croats possessed the strongest Nordic racial strain among all the peoples of southeastern Europe. Thirdly, the Croats (or more specifically the proto-Croats) could alternatively trace their roots to: 1) the heartland of the Nordic race in northern Europe (White Croatia); 2) the homeland of the white race in the Caucasus; and/or 3) the first great centre of Aryan civilisation, ancient Iran. Ustasha race theory stressed the central importance of the conquering Nordic-Aryan (Slavic-Gothic-Iranian) racial component in the formation of the Croatian nation, but had also underlined the significant contribution of the more or less Aryan, but conquered and subject, Illyrian-Celtic racial element of Dalmatia; this element contained an Armenoid racial strain through the Dinaric race. Thus, the Nordic proto-Croats had in all probability acquired Dinaric racial characteristics from the Dalmatian Illyrians (although Mirko Kus-Nikolajev had also defined the Illyrians as Nordic).

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[217] 'Ein indogermanisches Dokument'. Trans. Prof. Dr. Walther Wüst, *SS Leitheft*, 9, No. 7 (1943): 5.

[218] Ibid.

According to Ustasha race theory, the Croats were the ethnogenetic product of a blend of the conquerors and conquered: even the original Iranian-Gothic proto-Croats had ruled over a mass of Slav subjects with whom they subsequently interbred. Though Nordic-Aryan according to race, the proto-Croats were defined as a hybrid people in a specifically ethnolinguistic sense (they did not belong exclusively to any one Indo-European branch, whether Slavic, Indo-Iranian or Germanic). Through strong admixture with the Illyrians, the proto-Croats acquired a predominant Dinaric racial type, while retaining a marked Nordic racial strain. The leading or core Croat component thus developed in the western Balkans as a Nordic-Dinaric racial admixture.

This case of racial hybridity was deemed a positive historical phenomenon because it involved the mixing of similar *European* races. Ustasha race theory thus made a clear distinction between the Dinaric race and the Armenoid/Near Eastern race: though there were some physical similarities between these two racial types (e.g. brachycephaly)—which suggested a common origin—there were equally numerous differences, both in terms of physical features and racial psychology. These differences were supposed to be even more pronounced in the case of the Dinaric racial type in Croatia, which was said to have inherited a noticeable Nordic racial strain, thus increasing the exceptionally positive features of the ideal Croatian man.

CHAPTER NINE

THE RACIAL COUNTER-TYPE: THE NEAR EASTERN RACE

Introduction

Although the Serbs of the NDH were not officially classified as non-Aryan, the greater part of the minority Serbian population was considered to form a component of the general Asiatic-Balkan racial 'counter-type.' The Ustashe held the view that the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were a people of diverse ethnic-racial origin that only possessed a united national consciousness through adherence to the Serbian Orthodox Church. The absence of a defined legal status for the Serbs enabled the Ustasha regime to pursue a more flexible policy toward them. The autochthonous Serbs of the NDH were officially classified by the regime as 'Greek-Easterners' (*grčkoistočnjaci*).[1] Serbs from Serbia proper found living on the territory of the NDH were classified separately, as Serbians or *Srbijanci*.[2] In accordance with the theory that the Serbian Orthodox Church was the chief nurturer of a Serbian identity in Croatia, the Ustasha regime first set out to dismantle that institution on the territory of the NDH. On 18 July 1941 the regime banned the official use of the term 'Serbian Orthodox faith' (*srpskopravoslavna vjera*) and replaced it with the appellation 'Greek-Eastern faith' (*grčkoistočna vjera*), arguing that the term 'Serbian Orthodox' was incompatible with the Ustasha state.[3] In conversation with Archbishop Stepinac in 1941, Pavelić had described the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia as a 'political organization.'[4]

The regime also banned the use of the Cyrillic script on the territory of the NDH (25 April 1941). This prohibition was primarily motivated by the regime's policies of linguistic purism. In response to interwar unitarist attempts to fashion an artificial 'Yugoslav' or 'Serbo-Croatian' language,

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[1] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, 113–114, 159.

[2] On 7 June 1941 Slavko Kvaternik signed the Decree on the Duty to Register Serbians: this decree applied to Serbian immigrants and their descendants who had arrived in Croatia after 1900. See 'Naredba o dužnosti prijave Srbijanaca', in Požar ed. *Ustaša: Dokumenti o ustaškom pokretu*, 191.

[3] Matković, *Povijest NDH*, 113–114.

[4] Alexander, *Triple Myth*, 62.

the Ustashe established the 'Croatian State Office for Language' (*Hrvatski državni ured za jezik*), the aim of which was to purge the Croatian literary language of Serbian and, indeed, all foreign lexical influences, as well as to reintroduce the traditional Croat etymological spelling system.[5] The Ustasha policy of linguistic purism was part and parcel of the regime's aim to prove Croatian national individuality. The Law Decree on the Croatian Language, on its Purity and its Orthography' (14 August 1941) stipulated that the language of the Croats was 'not identical with any other language, nor is it a dialect of any other language.'[6] As Pavelić remarked to the *Sabor* in late February 1942, under Serbian rule,

> the most vulgar, the worst, ugliest Balkan words had become a component part of the Croatian language . . . Our beautiful language . . . our cultured language, in the truest sense of the word [our] noble language—for the entire Croatian people, the peasant and the worker, are a noble nation—this language became an ordinary jargon, [spoken by] the drift of human society in night time coffee-houses.[7]

The Serb-Vlachs

The Serbs in the NDH were officially classified as a religious minority, but Ustasha ideologists and nationalist intellectuals also defined the Greek-Easterners in an ethnic-racial sense. In line with the tripartite ethnic-racial classification outlined in Lorković's study of Croatian ethnic history from 1939, the NDH's ideologists and academics defined the Greek-Easterners as the descendants of: 1) nomadic Orthodox immigrants of various ethnic-racial origin (Vlach, Gypsy, Tzintzar, Bulgarian and Greek), who had served as Ottoman auxiliaries; 2) Catholic Croat converts to Orthodoxy; and 3) ethnic Slavic-Serbian settlers. The Ustashe did not attempt to precisely determine which Greek-Easterner was of Vlach, Gypsy, Serbian-Slavic or Croatian origin, since this clearly would have been a logistical impossibility.

Although linguistically indistinguishable from Croats, the NDH's Serbs had not, the Ustashe argued, managed to assimilate into the Croatian nation as other immigrants had done due to their different faith and

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[5] On the language question in the NDH see Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, 13–81.

[6] Ibid., 33.

[7] Pavelić cited in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, 92.

peculiar origins. In a speech at a public rally in the northwest Croatian town of Karlovac in July 1941, the Education Minister Mile Budak argued that the Croats had taught the Orthodox immigrants, who were a mixture of 'Greeks, Tzintzars, Gypsies, Bulgarians, Romanians and some Serbs', the Croatian language, but they had ended up becoming nationally Serb, not Croat.[8] The Ustashe viewed the 'problem' of the Orthodox minority in the NDH as one of trying to assimilate an antisocial nomadic element. As Filip Lukas explained in a speech in July 1943, there had historically been two waves of migration to Croatia, one from the West and the other from the 'Eastern-Balkan space.' The Western immigrants (including Germans, Slovaks, Slovenes, Czechs and Hungarians) were kindred to the Croats in a cultural and, to a lesser extent, racial sense though they did not share a common heritage and common national customs with the Croatian people.[9] While some of these Western immigrants had, through intermarriage with Croats, come to identify with their new homeland, many of them had not assimilated, thereby remaining outside of the Croat national community. In contrast to the Westerners, the Eastern Balkan immigrants, mainly Vlachs, Tzintzars and Gypsies of Serbian Orthodox faith, were both racially and culturally distinct from the Croats and remained more or less a foreign and hostile element on Croatian territory.[10] Lukas argued that the influence of the Eastern immigrants would have been far less if it had been limited to 'racially foreign elements.' However, a great number of the 'racially Croatian autochthonous population' had become 'spiritually equal' with the Eastern immigrants by converting to Orthodoxy, which enjoyed the protection of the Ottoman authorities.[11]

Although not subject to the race laws, the Serbs (or at least the majority of them) were defined in the NDH's cultural media as racially similar to Jews and Gypsies.[12] Serbs were identified as partially non-Aryan on the basis of the theory that they had been subject to centuries of miscegenation with Romanised Balkan nomadic elements and various Near Eastern immigrants during the period of Ottoman Turkish rule. According to an article in *Novi list* from May 1941, the predominant physical features of the

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8 'Prva ustaška skupština u Karlovcu', *Hrvatski narod*, 14 July 1941, 2.

9 Lukas, 'Ličnosti—stvaranja—pokreti', 235–236.

10 Ibid., 236–237.

11 Ibid., 237.

12 Although the Serbs were not, legally speaking, 'non-Aryan', discriminatory decrees were issued by the regime dealing with Serbs and Jews together. For example, see *Hrvatski narod*, 10 May 1941, 6: 'Židovi i Srbi moraju za 8 dana napustiti sjeverni dio Zagreba' ('Jews and Serbs must leave the northern part of Zagreb within 8 days').

Serbs consisted of dark skin, black hair and dark eyes due to strong admixture with the 'Romanised aborigines of the Balkan Peninsula.'[13] In an interview he gave to *Neue Ordnung* in September 1941 on the topic of the 'Serb Question', Mladen Lorković argued that the 'so-called' Vlachs, who formed a component of the Greek-Eastern/Serb population, were 'splinter' groups of 'Balkan-Romanic and Gypsy mixed peoples' (*Mischvölker*).[14] Ćiro Truhelka wrote, in an essay from 1941, that the Orthodox nomadic Vlachs who settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina were 'the descendants of pre-Aryan, prehistoric Mediterraneans.'[15] These Vlachs were eventually Slavicised in a cultural and linguistic sense but they had 'preserved the essential peculiarities of their race.' One could also find among the Bosnian Greek-Easterners a smaller number of descendants of the mercantile urban Tzintzars.[16] In the *Ustasha Annual* for 1942 Vatroslav Murvar referred to the nomadic Vlachs who had arrived in Croatia as the 'most criminal and most barbaric element' in the history of Europe; the Serbs themselves had always retained a 'nomadic migratory character', while a large portion of the population of Šumadija in Serbia was of Tzintzar, Romanian and Greek origin.[17]

Milivoj Karamarko had claimed, in his article on race in *Spremnost* in 1942, that a sizeable 15% of the Serbs possessed 'non-Aryan, Near Eastern and very conspicuous Gypsy' racial features.[18] He added that the 'Gypsy race' had exerted an important influence on the mentality of the Serbian political and economic elite (*čaršija*). Furthermore, only 25% of Serbs were Dinaric and 5% Nordic, while the relative majority (35%) belonged to the dark Armenoid race.[19] The Serbs had, as Mirko Košutić stated in the same year, 'received a considerable admixture of Gypsy, nomadic and Semitic tribal blood and are therefore clever, cunning, envious and selfish' and had a 'materialistic view of the world.'[20] In 'The Problem of the Balkan Nomads', published in *Kroatien Baut Auf* (1943), Theodor Uzorinac argued that the Balkan nomads (Vlachs) were the product of a symbiosis of various peoples: the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the Balkans, Balkan

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[13] See 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana.'
[14] 'Worum geht es in Bosnien?', *Neue Ordnung*, 7 September 1941, 2.
[15] Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu žiteljstva grčkoistočne vjeroispovijesti u Bosni i Hercegovini', 30.
[16] See ibid., 41–43.
[17] Vatroslav Murvar, 'Ustaška vjera', *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* (Zagreb: Glavni ustaški stan, 1942), 84–85.
[18] See Karamarko, 'Dinarska rasa i Hrvati.'
[19] Ibid. A further 15% of Serbs belonged to the Alpine race.
[20] See Košutić, 'Ništetnost državnih čina od 1918.'

Romans of diverse racial and ethnic origin, Mongols, Avars and Gypsies.[21] Franjo Ivaniček limited the influence of the Near Eastern race in Croatia to the Greek-Eastern population; this racially foreign element consisting of an 'ethnic mixture of Vlachs, Near Easterners, Serbs and others' had arrived in Croatian lands at the time of the Ottoman invasions.[22] The Near Eastern race was characterised physically by a relatively long head, a dark yellow-brown complexion with black-brown hair colour and, on average, a lower height; in a 'racial-psychological' sense, the Near Eastern race was marked by 'cunningness', which was 'more or less' characteristic of all races from the Near East.[23]

From May to July 1941, during an intensive propaganda campaign involving mass public rallies in several cities and towns throughout Croatia, the Serbs/Greek-Easterners of the NDH were portrayed by leading Ustasha functionaries (notably Mile Budak, Mladen Lorković and Mirko Puk) as the descendants of antisocial nomads as well as a fifth column of the Belgrade regime. They were deemed similar to the equally nomadic and stateless Jews and Gypsies. In the northwest Croatian town of Križevci in early July 1941, Puk spoke of enemies who were 'not members of our Croatian national community. These are the Jews and Serbs. The Jews are the bearers of the capitalist system . . . The Serbs came to our regions with Turkish units, as looters, as the dregs and refuse of the Balkans.'[24] Later that month in the Slavonian town of Donji Miholjac, Lorković explained to the crowd that the 'Croatian people must purify themselves from all elements that are a misfortune for this people, which are foreign and alien to that people' and those elements, noted Lorković, 'are our Serbs and our Jews.'[25] Budak spoke of the NDH's Serbs in a similar manner at several rallies, often referring to them as 'Vlachs' and/or as the descendants of various Orthodox Balkan immigrants, who had served as slaves and/or auxiliaries of the Ottoman Turks.[26] In his 1942 book on the Ustasha principles,

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[21] Theodor Uzorinac, 'Das Problem der Balkannomaden' in *Kroatien Baut Auf*, 16.

[22] Ivaniček, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie und Rassengeschichte der Kroaten', 180.

[23] Ibid., 181, 192.

[24] 'Doglavnik Dr Mile Budak o dužnostima svakog Hrvata', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 July 1941, 3.

[25] 'Značajan politički govor ministra dra Lorkovića na veličanstvenoj ustaškoj skupštini u Donjem Miholjcu', *Hrvatski narod*, 28 July 1941, 3. For similar views, also see Dr. Mladen Lorković, 'Zadaci našeg naraštaja', in B. Livadić and M. Jurkić eds. *Hrvatsko kolo: Književno-naučni zbornik XXII* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1941), 2–3.

[26] See, for example, 'Sav je narod uz Poglavnika', *Hrvatski narod*, 27 May 1941, 1, 3. Starčević's term 'Slavoserb' was also employed by Ustasha propaganda, but less as a synonym for Serbs and more as a term of reference for Croat Yugoslavist nationalists. See, for example, the article 'Nek' se čisti!', *Novi list*, 21 May 1941, 1.

Danijel Crljen argued that the Ustashe had to remove 'two yokes' off the backs of the Croatian people: in the political and national field, the Ustashe had 'to destroy the Serbian state rule over the Croatian land', while in the economic field, they had 'to erase the fatal and almighty influence of Jewry, which, alongside Serbdom, oppressed us.'[27] As an article in *Novi List* from May 1941 explained, the Jews had found a welcome home in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, for they had discovered an 'ideological cousin in the Serbian-Tzintzar-Gypsy mentality and spirit.'[28]

In line with the theory that the Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were all nomadic peoples (or the descendants of nomads), the Ustasha regime described the rise of the anti-NDH Partisan and Chetnik movements as the product of these socially destructive and uncivilised elements. Although the Greater Serbian royalist Chetniks and communist led Partisans were military and political enemies for most of the period of the Second World War, the fact that both were committed to the restoration of the Yugoslav state (albeit with quite different ideas on the future form of that state), and the fact that the Partisan movement was initially mainly Serb in terms of its ethnic make-up, enabled the Ustashe to depict them as essentially the same socio-political phenomenon. The regime's propaganda apparatus usually identified the two groups as one movement by use of the hyphenated term 'communist-chetnik.' The 'communist-chetnik bandits' were accused of collaborating with Jewish communists.[29] The Ustashe pointed to the fact that a considerable number of Jews were actively fighting in Partisan ranks and had leadership roles in the Partisan command.[30]

In a 1942 article in *Spremnost* under the title, 'There are no more Partisans—there have remained only plundering hordes', Ivo Bogdan sought to explain the influence of the 'various pathological types and great number of Jews' on the specific characteristics of the Partisans, arguing that the Jews lacked 'the moral ideas peculiar to us.'[31] Partisan characteristics were marked by the 'appalling atrocities that were perpetrated on the peaceful population' of the NDH, which, Bogdan remarked, could

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[27] Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta', 75.

[28] See 'Povjesna važnost zakonskih odredaba o zaštiti arijske krvi.'

[29] See, for example, the Croatian army report, 'Komunističko-četnički izgredi ('Communist-Chetnik riots') in *Hrvatski narod*, 7 August 1941, 3.

[30] See Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, 45, and the article 'Židovi-Odmetnici-Masoni' in *Spremnost*, 13 September 1942, 1–2.

[31] Ivo Bogdan, 'Partizana nema više—ostale su samo pljačkaške horde', *Spremnost*, 16 August 1942, 3.

not have been committed by 'beings that deserve the name of humans.'[32] In explaining these Partisan atrocities, one must take into account 'the centuries old alluvium of impure Balkan blood, the sediment of which has risen to the surface in these murky times.'[33] In his anti-communist brochure from 1944 Mladen Lorković argued that the Partisan-Chetnik 'outlaws' were the direct descendants of the *martolosi*, the Orthodox Vlach auxiliaries who had served as irregular Ottoman forces, or, as Lorković explained, 'the rabble . . . which was brought over in the Turkish period from the Balkan interior.'[34] In his interview given to *Neue Ordnung* in September 1941, Lorković referred to the communist-chetniks as *asoziale Untermenschen* ('antisocial subhumans').[35] The Ustashe had also coined a new Croatian word, *podčovjek* ('subhuman'), to describe the 'Jewish Bolshevik' led enemy.[36] According to Julije Makanec in 1944, the Croats fought war in the manner of the 'warrior nations of cultured Europe', which 'display a disgust and contempt toward bestiality and bloodthirstiness', the latter, typically 'Balkan' (i.e. Near Eastern), characteristics found 'only among lower races and peoples of low civilisational value.'[37]

The Ustasha regime often referred to the communist-chetniks collectively as the *šuma* ('forest'), meaning that they hid, as guerrilla bandits, in the forests and mountains of the NDH, in other words, in areas that were outside of civilisation. The idea that the communist-chetniks were uncivilised hordes was reinforced by the traditional Chetnik fashion of long hair and beards together with large fur caps, a look quite distinct from that of the clean-shaven and short-haired Ustashe outfitted in German or Italian style military uniforms. One Ustasha brochure from 1944 referred to the communist-chetniks as 'forest bandits', 'drunken rabble'

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, 9. Lorković had made the same identification between the *martolosi* and the Chetniks in conversation with Hitler, when he accompanied Pavelić for a meeting with the Führer at Klessheim castle in Austria on 27 April 1943. See Kisić Kolanović, 'Zapisi Mladena Lorkovića', 286–287.

[35] See 'Worum geht es in Bosnien?', 2.

[36] Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, 67–68. *Podčovjek* was a literal translation of the German word *Untermensch*. An article in *Nova Hrvatska* (9 October 1941) noted that the Jewish subhuman was raised 'in the underworld of the dark ghettos of the eastern cities.' The aim of the 'subhuman', the article noted, was to destroy everything that the civilised world had created over the centuries, something that came naturally to these beings that had similar traits to humans, but were spiritually on a lower level than any animal. Cited in Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u NDH*, 193fn, 68.

[37] Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici*, 60.

and 'a plundering gang gone wild.'[38] On the other side to this 'foreign rabble' stood the 'whole Croatian nation', which fought to 'protect its home, its family, its property and its state borders.'[39] Furthermore, this was to be a war of no mercy, for in 'this bloody confrontation, in this fight of justice against crime, as the Poglavnik said, there can be no third [path]. There are only two paths: either the Ustasha Croatian [state] or the "šuma."'[40]

Despite its claim that the Yugoslav Partisans were, for all intents and purposes, a Serbian armed force, the Ustasha regime could not ignore the large number of Croats who had joined the Partisans. The Ustashe had a generally low opinion of these Croats, even if they did concede that the Partisans were often the only refuge for Croats repressed by the Fascist political and military authorities in the Italian occupied parts of Croatia.[41] The Partisan leadership of 'The State Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Croatia' (*Zemaljsko antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Hrvatske*, ZAVNOH) was completely committed to the ideologies of pan-Slavism, Yugoslavism and to Croatian-Serbian political dualism within Croatia. In 1944 ZAVNOH declared that 'the Croatian and Serbian nations in Croatia are completely equal.'[42] The Croat Partisan leaders saw Stalin's Russia through the lens of 'Slavic reciprocity,' while ZAVNOH was viewed as the culmination of the political and national aims of leaders such as Strossmayer and Stjepan Radić.[43] The Croat communist leader Andrija Hebrang (1899–1949) regarded the Croats as a separate political nation, but viewed Croat ethnic-racial identity as being exclusively Slavic.[44] Croat Partisan recognition of Serb political nationhood in Croatia was of course completely unacceptable to the Ustasha regime.[45] As Mirko Puk remarked, in his speech in July 1941, 'we cannot allow that in

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[38] Bzik, *Ustaški pogledi*, 75–76.

[39] Ibid., 76.

[40] Ibid.

[41] In a public speech in Zagreb after the Italian capitulation the Poglavnik himself made references to the 'Croatian sons' who had gone to the *šuma* after being expelled from their homes by 'intruders' [i.e. Italians] and offered an amnesty to all those who would return home. Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, Vol. 1, 118–119.

[42] Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Hebrang: Iluzije i otrežnjenja 1899–1945* (Zagreb: Institut za suvremenu povijest, 1995), 126.

[43] Ibid., 86–88.

[44] Ibid., 82–88.

[45] Out of the total of 150,000 Partisans from Croatia in late 1944 and early 1945, almost 30% were ethnic Serbs (60% were Croats, the remaining 10% of other nationalities). Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999), 182.

our national state two nations rule.'[46] In a talk delivered on Zagreb radio in December 1943, the chief director of propaganda in the NDH, Matija Kovačić (1901–1972), referred to the 'small percentage of Croats who had succumbed to the propaganda of Moscow' as 'refuse', which is 'prone to criminality, theft, murder and destruction' and which put itself at the disposal of 'identical types of another blood, of another nationality.'[47]

Religious Conversion and Racial Restrictions

By late 1941 the Ustashe needed to temporarily halt their policy of deporting (together with killing) Serbs, following the outbreak of Chetnik and Partisan rebellions in the NDH and German occupied Serbia, which had prompted German authorities in Serbia to close the border with the NDH. German military authorities and diplomats felt that the harsh Ustasha policies toward the Serbs were chiefly responsible for the expansion of the Chetnik and Partisan movements.[48] Therefore, beginning in September 1941, conversion (in reality, forced assimilation) to Roman Catholicism emerged as the main Ustasha policy toward the Greek-Easterners. Preparations for such a policy, however, had already been made months in advance.

As early as 3 May 1941 the Ustasha regime had issued the Law Decree on Conversion from One Religion to Another: all previous laws dealing with conversions were annulled, while converts needed to submit a written application to the state authorities concerning their decision to change religion.[49] Orthodox Serbs were legally permitted to convert to the other recognised religions of the NDH, Islam and Protestantism (the Evangelical Church), though the Ustashe really desired conversion to the Catholic Church.[50] The Ustashe were keen to bolster the Croatian national element, but not let the NDH's *Volksdeutsche* (with most Croatian Protestants belonging to this community) or Bosnian Muslim autonomists increase the number of 'Germans' or 'Bosnians' through Serb conversion

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[46] See 'Doglavnik Dr Mile Budak o dužnostima svakog Hrvata.'

[47] Matija Kovačić, *Partizanska lakrdija: Partizanstvo mora nestati!* (Zagreb: Hrvatski tiskarski zavod, 1943), 27.

[48] See Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 99–102 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 395–396, 401.

[49] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 82 and Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia*, 534.

[50] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 88.

to Protestantism and Islam. The Ustashe reasoned that the assimilation of part of the Serb population would be facilitated by the conversion of the Greek-Easterners to the faith to which the majority of the Croatian nation belonged. Converting to Catholicism would thus be a much simpler process than conversion to a non-Christian faith (Islam), while joining the Evangelical Church might well have entailed assimilation into ethnic German rather than Croatian culture. In any case, many NDH Serbs sought conversion to the Catholic faith in the early months of 1941 in the hope of avoiding discrimination and/or persecution.[51]

On 30 July 1941 the Ministry of Justice and Religion sent a detailed circular to all grand counties in the NDH, in which the regime spelled out the procedures for conversion. Greek-Easterners wishing to convert to Catholicism had to provide 'a certificate of good conduct' issued by their respective district authorities.[52] According to the circular, the government was guided by the 'basic principle' that Greek-Eastern schoolmasters, priests, tradesmen, artisans and rich peasants and the intelligentsia in general should not receive certificates.[53] Therefore, conversion was limited to the Serbian Orthodox peasantry, for the regime deduced that Serb national identity among the peasants was weaker than among educated or wealthy Serbs; the conversion of peasants would seemingly be a far less complicated process. Furthermore, religious conversion was not to be conducted in all areas of the NDH. The circular stated that the rules for conversion were valid for all grand counties in the NDH, except Gora and Krbava-Psat—counties with a large Serb population found on the border between Croatia and northwest Bosnia—where the authorities could act 'according to the local situation.'[54] What this essentially meant was that, in the above strategically important areas (which represented a sort of Serbian 'cordon'), the solution to the 'Serb problem' would be expedited through the final means (i.e. deportation and extermination).[55]

The Ustasha government had also made clear in the July circular that Greek-Easterners wishing to convert to the Protestant faith and thereby (hope to) join the German National Community in the NDH (*Volksgruppe*) would not enjoy the rights of those of German blood.[56] The Ustashe

[51] Ibid., 84.
[52] See Falconi, *Silence of Pius XII*, 283–284 and Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 174.
[53] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 174.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Falconi, *Silence of Pius XII*, 285.

were strongly opposed to any moves whereby the NDH's *Volksgruppe* might become, as Pavelić told Italian Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano (1903–1944) on 16 December 1941, 'a pole of attraction for Croatian elements which are not of German origin.'[57] There were constant bureaucratic tussles between the Ustashe and *Volksgruppe* over whether a given individual in the ethnically mixed areas of north-eastern Croatia was German or Croatian, and Ustasha authorities were deeply concerned about Croats (of German descent) joining the *Volksgruppe*.[58] Therefore, attempts by the local Germans in north-eastern Croatia to entice Croats to join the *Volksgruppe*, and Protestant efforts to convert Orthodox Serbs, were not looked kindly upon by the Ustashe, even if the regime did not otherwise discriminate against Protestants, indeed arguing that 'every Protestant has the right to become an Ustasha.'[59]

In October 1941, the regime stipulated that Jews, Gypsies and Tzintzars wishing to convert to Catholicism would be prohibited from doing so.[60] Conversions in the NDH were therefore subject, in theory, to racial restrictions: in a legal sense, only peasant Orthodox Serbs could convert. The Ustashe were prepared to assimilate a portion of the NDH's Serbian population, and justified this policy by arguing that many of the NDH's autochthonous Serbs were in fact of ethnic Croat origin. In an interview he gave to *Neue Ordnung* in late August 1941, Ante Pavelić argued that there were few 'genuine Serbs' in Croatia, since the majority were either 'Croats of the Serbian-Orthodox religion or Vlachs.'[61] Pavelić explained that the NDH was now the scene of 'a great movement' among part of the Orthodox population 'with the aim of a return to Croatdom [*Kroatentum*] and membership of the Catholic Church.'[62] The Poglavnik also pointed out to Italian representatives in the NDH that 'the largest part of the Orthodox in Croatia is of Croatian race and language' and should therefore return to 'racial and political Croatdom' (through conversion to Catholicism).[63]

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[57] *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, Malcolm Muggeridge ed. Trans. Stuart Hood (London: Odhams Press Ltd, 1948), 472.

[58] HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 26: Broj 23914/1941 ('Upisivanje i stupanja Hrvata u članstvo njemačke narodne skupine') 14 August 1941.

[59] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 125fn, 107. Around 1500 Serbs ended up converting to Protestantism. See Biondich, 'Religion and Nation', 111.

[60] Greble, *Sarajevo, 1941–1945*, 94, 96. On the Gypsies and Tzintzars see HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 34: Broj 26081/1941 ('Upute za vjerozakonski prelaz grčkoistočnjaka') 24 October 1941.

[61] 'Der Poglavnik zur Innenpolitik', *Neue Ordnung*, 24 August 1941, 2.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija*, 271.

As far as the Catholic Church's position on religious conversion is concerned, it is true that, once the regime announced its intention to convert mass numbers of Serbs, the Church hierarchy in Croatia welcomed the possibility of gaining new converts, especially among the 'schismatic' Orthodox. On the other hand, the Church hierarchy opposed the regime's policy because the Ustashe wanted to convert part of the Serb population in order to achieve a secular (racial), and not religious, aim: the integration of those Serbs into the Croat national community. Furthermore, the regime's policy violated Catholic teaching for the conversions were often carried out under duress; the Church wanted potential converts to seek admission to the Catholic faith because they truly desired conversion of their own free will. In any case, the government, and not the Catholic Church, set the rules as to who could convert.[64] The regime was able to secure the services of a number of lower clergymen for carrying out the conversion ceremonies, but the Church hierarchy remained opposed.[65] Archbishop Stepinac had, for his part, eventually instructed the clergy to allow Orthodox Christians to convert, without too much concern for their motives, if conversion would save their lives from Ustasha persecution.[66]

From September 1941 to February 1942 close to 100,000 Serbs in the NDH converted to Catholicism.[67] Catholicised Serbs were officially classified as Croats,[68] but they were not always safe from further harassment and persecution from the more radical elements of the Ustasha movement. These Ustashe (including Pavelić himself) were certainly prepared to assimilate some Orthodox Serbs, but tended to favour a racial policy, according to which the majority of the NDH's Serbs were a different ethnic-racial minority that could not be assimilated. Therefore, deportation and outright extermination were considered more 'appropriate' methods than the more time consuming and complex process of converting and assimilating large numbers of people who considered themselves nationally Serb.[69]

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[64] Alexander, *The Triple Myth*, 74–76.

[65] See ibid., pp. 75–76 and Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 86–87.

[66] Alexander, *The Triple Myth*, 85.

[67] Using archives from the Religious Section of the NDH's State Directorate for Renewal, Biondich gives a figure of around 97,447 to 99,333 converts to Catholicism (in the 'vast majority' of cases) for the period from 1941 to 1942. Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 91, 111.

[68] HDA, MUP NDH, kutija 45: Broj 818-XI-2/1942 ('Srbi prelaznici na rimokatoličku vjeru—upisivanje narodnosti'), 13 January 1942.

[69] A number of Ustasha district authorities were quite indifferent or hostile to the policy of conversion, arguing 'why should the Vlachs convert, they should all be killed.' Cited in Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 103.

The Croatian Orthodox Church

As they were locked in a bloody struggle with both Chetniks and Partisans, by early 1942 the Ustashe tried to come to a *modus vivendi* with what was left of the Orthodox Serbian minority in the NDH. After the mass conversions, mass deportations and outright killings, there were still approximately over a million Serbs living within the borders of the NDH. It should be noted, however, that by early 1942 large parts of the NDH were under Partisan or Chetnik control. With the added pressure of growing German disapproval over his anti-Serbian measures, Pavelić decreed the establishment of the 'Croatian Orthodox Church' on 3 April 1942.[70] In this case, the regime was only prepared to assimilate the NDH's remaining Serbs (not including converts to Catholicism) who 'voluntarily and formally joined' the Croatian Orthodox Church.[71] Pavelić had not set up a separate Croat Orthodox Church in the previous year because he had been reluctant to allow the NDH's Serbs any religious autonomy at all, for they would, he argued, 'again remain Vlachs and be our enemies at the first opportunity.'[72] A small number of the Serbian Orthodox clergy joined the new Croatian church, but the Serbian Church hierarchy and most ordinary Serbs rejected it.[73] It was left to a Russian émigré priest, Grigorij Ivanovič Maksimov (1861–1945), to head the church, under the name of Germogen. The Croatian Orthodox Church was officially recognised as an autocephalous one by the Orthodox Church in Romania.[74]

In spite of its doubtful propaganda value, the Croatian Orthodox Church could not, however, have been conceived without the justification provided by Ustasha ethnolinguistic-race theory, namely, the argument that large numbers of Serbs were in fact of ethnic Croatian origin. Although Ustasha propaganda placed more emphasis on the theory of the Croatian origin of the Greek-Easterners during the period of extensive conversions and the establishment of the Croat Orthodox Church, it would be misleading

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[70] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 177–178.

[71] Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 546. Also see Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 135fn, 110 and Petar Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva: U prošlosti i budućnosti* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1996), 295.

[72] Pavelić in conversation with the Catholic priest Vilim Cecelja. Vilim Cecelja, 'Moja sjećanja na uzoritoga kardinala Stepinca, zagrebačkog nadbiskupa', *Hrvatska revija*, XL, No. 4 (1990): 721.

[73] Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 178. There were approximately 51 Croatian Orthodox priests in the NDH by the end of 1942. See Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, 297.

[74] Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, 199–201. The Croat Orthodox Church also appears to have been recognised by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, but this remains uncertain. See ibid., 203.

to claim, as Mark Biondich does, that 'within a matter of months in 1941 Ustaša rhetoric had evolved from exclusionist, virtually racist language (Serbs as a supposed alien element, Vlachs, Roma) to assimilationist language (Serbs as supposed old Catholics, and later as Orthodox "Croats").'[75] On the contrary, the regime's ideologists and intellectuals had been fairly consistent in portraying the Serbs of the NDH as the descendants of the three main ethnic-racial groupings outlined earlier in this chapter.

For example, in a speech given before Croatian soldiers in Zagreb at the end of December 1941 (during the period of intensive conversions) Field Marshal Kvaternik made reference to the 'one part of the Croats' who converted to the Greek-Eastern faith, but also to the 'various mixture of peoples' that had arrived in Croatia with the Turks and who, because of their Orthodox faith, became Serbs.[76] Mladen Lorković also pointed out, in a short political essay from late 1941, that 'a considerable part' of the Orthodox population of the NDH was of Croatian origin; these Croats had converted to the Orthodox faith during the period of Ottoman rule. On the other hand, a large number of Orthodox Christians from the central Balkans, some of 'Slavic breed', others of 'Aromanian breed', had also settled on Croatian soil during the same period.[77] In his essay on Bosnian history from early 1942 the Poglavnik had argued that the 'Orthodox element' of Bosnia was mainly of Romanic (Vlach) descent, while the remaining part consisted of the descendants of Catholic Croats who had converted during the Ottoman period; only the Orthodox population of Slavonia and Vojvodina was of ethnic Serbian (Slavic) origin.[78] In his 1941 study on the origins of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Greek-Easterners Ćiro Truhelka remarked that the sizeable number of fair-skinned Orthodox Christians in eastern Bosnia were descended from Catholic Croat converts to Orthodoxy.[79]

Even after the establishment of the Croat Orthodox Church, the Ustashe did not officially classify all Orthodox Christians in the NDH as 'Orthodox Croats.' For example, an article in *Hrvatski narod* in June 1944 claimed that the title, 'The Croatian Orthodox Church', did not necessarily mean that all members of this church were of Croatian nationality; on the other hand,

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[75] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 112.
[76] 'Prošla godina bila je za Hrvate najvažnija godina', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 January 1942, 1.
[77] Lorković 'Zadaci našeg naraštaja', 3.
[78] See Pavelić, 'Pojam Bosne kroz stoljeća.'
[79] Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu žiteljstva grčkoistočne vjeroispovijesti u Bosni i Hercegovini', 37.

the title signified that Orthodox Christians were 'members of a church community that exists in the Independent State of Croatia', and was therefore called 'Croatian.'[80] The Croatian *Orthodox Calender* for 1944 included an essay on 'Orthodoxy in Croatia', in which the author, the pro-Croat Montenegrin writer and publisher, Savić Marković Štedimlija (1906–1971), listed all the peoples that had contributed to the ethnic make-up of the Orthodox population in the NDH, and these included Vlachs, Tzintzars, Greeks, Serbs, as well as Croatian converts to Orthodoxy.[81] Although he did not mention the three broad groups into which the NDH's Serbs were divided, Biondich also notes that, after April 1942, the 'official Ustasha line' was 'that the Orthodox were largely of Croat nationality.'[82] In other words, the NDH's Serbs could also be of Vlach, Gypsy, Greek or ethnic Serbian descent.

Some of the NDH's Orthodox inhabitants were clearly acceptable to the regime as Croats. There were three Orthodox generals in the NDH's Home Guard, one of whom, Đuro Gruić (1887–1945), was counted among Pavelić's most trusted generals.[83] The Ustashe had nothing against Orthodox Christianity *per se*; they simply viewed the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as an instrument of Greater Serbian nationalism. Accordingly, the small number of Orthodox Montenegrins, Russians, Romanians and Ukrainians living in the NDH were not discriminated against or persecuted.[84] The NDH enjoyed cordial relations with its two Orthodox Axis allies, Bulgaria and Romania. There were many cultural exchanges between Bulgaria and Croatia during the Second World War and the Croatian-Bulgarian Society in Zagreb promoted the works of Bulgarian artists and writers.[85] Pavelić also maintained his close political links with the Macedonian nationalist leader Vanča Mihajlov (1897–1990),

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[80] Cited in Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, 310.

[81] Cited in ibid., 71–86. Croatian Orthodox texts and calenders were printed, in accordance with Ustasha law, in Latin and not Cyrillic script. See ibid., 316.

[82] Mark Biondich, '"We Were Defending the State:" Nationalism, Myth, and Memory in Twentieth-Century Croatia', in John Lampe and Mark Mazower eds. *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004), 64.

[83] The other two generals were Lavoslav Milić and Fedor Dragojlov. To be sure, Supreme Ustasha Headquarters (*Glavni ustaški stan*) did not look favourably on the high military office of these Croats of Serb-Orthodox origin. See Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 426, 436. For a short biography of Gruić, who was also made a 'knight' (*vitez*) of the NDH, see 'Gruić, Đuro' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, 142.

[84] Biondich, 'Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia', 88.

[85] Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Zagreb-Sofija: Prijateljstvo po mjeri ratnog vremena 1941–1945* (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2003), 59–62.

who, at Pavelić's expense, resided in Zagreb with his wife from 1941 to 1944. Otherwise, the Ustashe had no political interest in the fate of the Serbians of Serbia proper and even maintained diplomatic contacts (albeit strained with a great deal of mistrust) with the Serbian collaborationist regime of General Milan Nedić (1877–1946) in Belgrade.[86]

The Orthodoxy of the Romanians, Macedonians and Bulgarians certainly never bothered the Ustashe, and nor were they particularly bothered by the Protestant faith or neo-pagan Nordicist beliefs of many of their German comrades. Religion was basically irrelevant as an indicator of national identity in the NDH. In his speech to the *Sabor* in late February 1942, Pavelić claimed that the NDH was home to Catholics, Muslims, Protestants and Orthodox Christians:

> It is [in] the national interest that there are no disagreements in the state, and least of all religious friction. This is of particular interest to us, because we know that we are on the border of the Balkans, we know that we were especially in contact with the same Balkans for centuries . . . we know that until recently peoples in the Balkans were differentiated by faith, that nationhood was . . . so masked because of life, because of events, that only faith was visible and [so] people were differentiated according to faith . . . This is a factor of the past.[87]

The Jews

When they were not being classed together with Serb-Vlachs and Gypsies as racially Oriental or Near Eastern non-Aryans, Croatia's Jews were specifically accused by the Ustashe of the following three wrongdoings in the interwar period: controlling the Croatian economy, exploiting Croatian peasants and corrupting art, music and public morality. In an article in the 'Croatian Worker' in late April 1941 the Poglavnik's adjutant, Vjekoslav Blaškov (1911–1948), claimed that, 'throughout the entire history of mankind', the Jews were considered 'the enemies of every nation' that had allowed them to live in their societies.[88] The 'ancient and cultured' Egyptian people were forced to expel the Jews from Egypt because of their 'destructive influence' as 'poisoners' of Egyptian society and morality. The

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[86] Ibid., 110, 168–169.

[87] Pavelić cited in Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo*, 90.

[88] See Vjekoslav Blaškov, 'Židovi su kroz cijelu povijest čovječanstva smatrani neprijateljima svakog naroda', *Hrvatski radnik*, 30 April 1941, in Goldstein, *Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 110.

Jews were further expelled from the societies of all cultured peoples in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. In the medieval period, the Jews had been 'the bearers of ideas that destroyed the spirit of European peoples,' and always introduced those elements that sought to destroy the economic and spiritual life of 'Aryan society.' The Jews were the intellectual instigators of both economic liberalism and Bolshevism: 'The founder of Marxism Karl Marx was himself a typical racial Jew. In his doctrine there is not a single Aryan thought from which would spring forth the dynamism of life, enthusiasm and readiness for self-sacrifice.'[89] According to a lecture in August 1941, given by the first NDH State Secretary for Propaganda, Josip Milković (1909–1966), Jewish led Marxism 'destroys the blood [based] national family and creates so-called classes.'[90] The Jews wished to lead these classes, which were without blood ties, into a never-ending struggle against 'elevated ideas', to turn the 'conscientious and unselfish man against God and his nation, against the noble idea and his own blood.'[91]

An article in *Hrvatski narod*, from February 1942, claimed that 'every Jew is simply a member of the large Jewish International', and all the leading anti-national ideologies and movements in the world were created by international Jewry: 'atheism, rationalist materialism, Freemasonry, Communism, etc.'[92] In the same month and year, the Ustasha functionary Blaž Lorković (1903–1947) criticised the 'superficial Marxist doctrine' of the 'Jewish race', according to which nations were simply 'artificial creations.' While Lorković admitted that some factors of nationhood could be considered artificial—though it was difficult in this case to delineate between natural and artificial phenomena—nations were nonetheless

> natural products, formed [through] the centuries and millennia under the influence of various factors such as: geographical position, climate, the form of soil, racial characteristics and racial mixture . . . historical fluctuations, religious and spiritual movements, great individuals, etc.[93]

As Lorković argued, it was precisely the internationalist (Jewish) capitalists and Marxists who had tried to unsuccessfully create new nations

[89] Ibid.
[90] 'Zašto smo nacionalisti, a ne komunisti', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 August 1941, 6.
[91] Ibid.
[92] S. R. Žrnovački, 'Židovi podgrizaju narodni život', *Hrvatski narod*, 7 February 1942, 2.
[93] Blaž Lorković, 'Ustaški pokret u borbi za oslobođenje Hrvatske', *Hrvatski narod*, 10 February 1942, 3. Blaž was the elder brother of Mladen Lorković.

such as the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak, which were artificial because they were not founded under 'natural and historical conditions.'[94]

In his speech to the *Sabor* on 24 February 1942, the NDH's first Minister for Internal Affairs, Andrija Artuković (1899–1988), claimed that international Jewry was supported by its 'two international branches', the Communists and Freemasons. He accused all three of having attempted to erode the Croatian nation's 'family life, its faith, its morality, its civilisation and its youth.'[95] In order to defend the Croatian people from the 'insatiable and poisonous parasites' of international Jewry, the NDH had decided to solve 'the so-called Jewish question.'[96] In his 1942 book on the Ustasha principles, Danijel Crljen alleged that in the cultural field, the Jews had, during the interwar period, 'promoted decadence in all directions.' They had thus 'made music into barbarism, painting into a disgrace to true art [and] the theatre into an exhibition of absurdity and filth.'[97] In an article in *Spremnost* from 1942 the Croatian writer Antun Bonifačić (1901–1986) claimed that the Jew did not possess the concept of honour, which represented 'the fundamental Aryan principle.'[98] In contrast to 'the parasitic people of Jewish liars,' the Aryan man would 'rather die than trample on his honour', something 'we Croats had beautifully shown in the course of our national struggle.'[99]

The Jewish spirit was 'materialistic in its essence' and thus completely alien to the European spirit.[100] As Julije Makanec argued in 1944, it was clear that the Jewish spirit

> . . . can not comprehend the huge role of creative and heroic personalities in the history of politics and culture . . . From this basic characteristic of the [Jewish spirit] there follows the doctrine of Marxist historical materialism, according to which the essential and only decisive content of world history is made by the struggle over purely materialistic values . . .[101]

Jewish Marxism was therefore focused on trying to destroy the three 'spiritual foundations' of European culture. The first of these spiritual foundations was Antiquity, 'with its cult of heroic and creative personalities',

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94 Ibid.

95 'Izvršivanje zakona u slovu i duhu dužnost je svih službenika unutarnje uprave', *Hrvatski narod*, 26 February 1942, 3.

96 Ibid.

97 Crljen, 'Načela hrvatskog ustaškog pokreta', 77.

98 Antun Bonifačić, 'Europski duh je našao sebe', *Spremnost*, 28 March 1942, 9.

99 Ibid.

100 Makanec, *Hrvatski vidici*, 27.

101 Ibid.

while the second was Christianity, whereby man was 'a bearer of the spirit' and 'a citizen of not only the visible, but also the invisible world.'[102] The third foundation of European culture was nationalism; the nation was a 'God-given dynamic creative entity . . . which, as a moral and spiritual medium, encompasses all its members and gives their individual lives a higher and durable meaning . . .'[103] According to Makanec, the NDH was engaged in a struggle for the survival of European culture:

> Fighting today for Croatia and Europe, we fight for the values that are represented by names such as Sophocles, Plato, Dante, Bošković, Pascal, Goethe and so many other great men, and against the world whose representatives are Rotschild, Morgenthau, La Guardi, Apfelbaum or Bela Kun.[104]

In contrast to the urban Jews, who were described by the Ustashe as having exerted a deleterious influence on the Croatian economy, culture and morality, the Gypsies were simply considered a racially alien, nomadic people with no culture to speak of and who were especially prone to criminality and disease. There was actually very little Ustasha propaganda that specifically targeted the Gypsies; they were frequently mentioned but almost always in association with the Serb-Vlachs. The Ustashe were therefore more interested in lowering the racial status of the Greek-Easterners.

Conclusion

According to the Ustashe, the Greek-Eastern inhabitants of the NDH were not a people in the strictest sense of the word because they were the descendants of nomadic immigrants and had been unable to fully assimilate into Croatian national society. The Greek-Easterners were not even truly Serbian, except for their Serbian Orthodox faith; as such they had no true homeland of their own. A sizeable portion of the Greek-Easterners was defined as being of Croatian and/or Serbian-Slavic descent and thus contained a marked Aryan racial strain. However, the greater part of the Greek-Eastern minority was also said to share many racial (physical and psychological) characteristics with the Jews and Gypsies due to a stronger pre-Aryan Vlach and Near Eastern racial component. Franjo Ivaniček

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[102] Ibid., 26.
[103] Ibid., 27.
[104] Ibid., 22.

argued that 'the relationship of the Orthodox Croats with the Orthodox immigrants from the East exerted a certain influence on the racial constitution of their present day descendants'; this influence showed the more dominant 'somatic' traits of the Near Eastern racial type, such as a 'pronounced dark complexion.'[105]

At the same time, the Orthodox population could not be classified overall as non-Aryan. It might still be possible, so reasoned the Ustashe, to retrieve a part of the partially Aryan Greek-Eastern minority for the racial benefit of the Croatian people. In that sense, Ustasha racial ideology cannot be defined as specifically anti-Serbian. The Ustashe were opposed to the presence of a population within the borders of their state which possessed a Serbian national and political consciousness and looked to Serbia as its true homeland. The Ustashe were further opposed to what they viewed as the Greater Serbian political expansionism of both the Serbian political elite in Belgrade and the national Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia. For the Ustashe, the Greek-Eastern minority as a whole represented an antisocial internal enemy that acted as a fifth column of the Serbian royalist regime in Belgrade. Furthermore, the Serbian political elite had used the racial supranational ideology of Yugoslavism, alongside its Greater Serbian nationalism, in order to break Croatian national resistance and eradicate a separate Croatian ethnic and cultural identity. The Ustashe duly accepted the fact that Yugoslavism had originated among the Croats themselves, regarding the acceptance of Yugoslavism and/or pan-Slavism in the nineteenth century as having almost led to national suicide. In 1944 Mladen Lorković wrote that 'the Greater Serbian idea had from its creation entered into the framework of pan-Slav conceptions.'[106] He argued that Vuk Karadžić's 'pseudoscientific' theory of the Serbian identity of all *štokavian*-speaking South Slavs had been supported by pan-Slav scholars such as Šafařík and Kollár, while the Serbian state had been created by 'Russian arms and Russian diplomatic protection.'[107]

The Ustasha regime was thus anti-Yugoslav and anti-pan-Slav in a political sense, but its racial ideology did not view ethnic Serbs *per se* as a racial (or political) threat. The Ustashe made a theoretical distinction between the authentic Slavic-Aryan Serbs and the Serbianised descendants of the pre-Aryan Vlachs and Near Eastern immigrants; Milivoj Karamarko had

[105] Ivaniček, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie und Rassengeschichte der Kroaten', 181.
[106] Lorković, *Hrvatska u borbi protiv boljševizma*, 10.
[107] Ibid., 9–10.

estimated that one-quarter of the Serbs were Dinaric, which theoretically made those Serbs racial relatives of the majority Dinaric population of Croatia. One could argue that the Ustashe were specifically 'anti-Vlach' and 'anti-Asiatic', for it was the Near Eastern racial element within the Serbian people—together with the racially non-Aryan Jewish and Gypsy minorities—that was said to represent the real threat to the racial unity and health of the Croatian people.

EPILOGUE

In 1945 the Croatian writer Vladimir Nazor (1876–1949), who joined the Partisans at the end of 1942, wrote a poem entitled 'Poems of the Fist', in which he declared that the Croats were not Goths but 'an ancient fragment of Slavdom.' Whoever dared to claim differently, Nazor wrote, would 'feel our fist.'[1] After the collapse of the NDH in May 1945, the new communist authorities soon turned Nazor's threat of violence against the proponents of the non-Slavic theories of Croat origin into actual policy. The leading proponent of the Gothic theory, the 78 year-old historian and Catholic priest Kerubin Šegvić, was sentenced to death, and subsequently executed, by a Yugoslav military court, on the grounds that his theory on 'the non-Slavic origin of the Croats' was designed to 'demolish Slavic unity' and 'incite national hatred among the peoples of Yugoslavia.'[2] In spite of its theoretical adherence to Marxist internationalism, the leadership of the new Yugoslav state under Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980) also strongly promoted the racial-supranational ideologies of pan-Slavism and Yugoslavism, at least in the early period of its rule. Belgrade was chosen as the site of the Soviet 'Pan-Slav Congress' held in December 1946, because Marshal Tito was regarded as Stalin's most 'trusted communist fighter', while 'the Yugoslavs were regarded as the second ranking Slav nation' after the Soviet Union. At the end of his opening speech at the Congress, Tito made a 'three-fold toast, to Slav solidarity, to our greatest Slav brother, the Soviet Union [and] to its leader of genius, Stalin.'[3]

Theories of the non-Slav origin of the Croats were not officially welcome in Yugoslav academic and political life. In a similar manner to Nazor, another pro-Yugoslavist Croat writer, Miroslav Krleža, later ridiculed Stjepan Krizin Sakač's Iranian theory of Croat origins as 'historical lunacy.'[4] Although Tito's Yugoslavia officially recognised the various South Slav peoples as separate nations, these peoples were nonetheless thought to belong to a wider South Slav ethnolinguistic community united by 'brotherhood and unity.' As Ante Škegro points out, 'until the collapse of

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[1] A verse of Nazor's poem is cited in Jareb, 'Jesu li Hrvati postali Goti?', 871.

[2] See 'Šegvić, Kerubin' in *Tko je tko u NDH*, 378.

[3] Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), 235–237.

[4] Škegro, 'Two Public Inscriptions from the Greek Colony of Tanais', 11.

Yugoslav Communism, every debate regarding . . . the Iranian theory of Croatian origin was dangerous.'[5] Therefore, pan-Slavic racial nationalism was (within certain limits) completely acceptable to the Yugoslav communist regime; the national anthem of Tito's Yugoslavia was a nineteenth century pan-Slavic song, *Hej Slaveni* ('Hey Slavs').

The Yugoslav Partisans had fought to re-establish the South Slavic national state and, conversely, also set up a socialist state in which citizenship was open to all regardless of ethnic-racial origin. The Ustashe had fought to establish an equal position for Croatia in the European-Aryan political community of states under the leadership of the Third Reich. While the Yugoslavist Croat Partisans saw Slavic Russia as their natural ally and the Germans ('Goths') as their natural enemies, the Ustashe regarded the Aryan Germans as a related people in contrast to the largely Asiatic Russians. In the nineteenth century the Croat pan-Slavists and Yugoslavists had stressed the Croats' Aryan heritage in relation to the Hungarians, but their pan-Slavism had also led them to view the Germanic peoples as their historical enemies. The pan-Slavists/Yugoslavists had not distinguished between language and race, or rather, had equated language with race. The Ustashe had drawn a clear theoretical dividing line between linguistic and racial identity.

In terms of ideology, the racial ideas of the Ustasha state cannot be examined without exploring their deeper intellectual and ideological roots. As this book has highlighted, the peculiarly Croatian Aryan race theory in the NDH was not a politically pragmatic imitation of Nazi race theory, but had developed within a long ideological South Slavic discourse involving the rival (but in some respects similar) racial ideas of Yugoslavism, Greater Serbianism and anti-Yugoslavist Croatian nationalism. For the Ustashe, the Slavic-speaking Croats were of mixed ethnolinguistic stock, but this mixed stock of Iranians, Slavs, Goths, Illyrians and Celts belonged to the same white Indo-European or Aryan race of peoples. The racial idea in the NDH encouraged the Croats to look for their authentic biological and cultural-spiritual roots in the heartlands of the Nordic-led white Aryan race: northern Europe, the Caucasus and Iran. Ustasha race theory also emphasised the partially autochthonous Balkan-Illyrian-Dinaric racial roots of the Croats.

The image of the ideal Croatian racial type—of Aryan Slavic-Iranian-Gothic-Illyrian-Celtic blood and marked by Dinaric and/or Nordic

[5] Ibid.

physical and psychological features—had emerged in nationalist intellectual circles in Croatia long before the establishment of the NDH. Further confirmation that the ideal Croatian racial type was not the product of a practical Ustasha political accommodation to Nazi ideology can be discerned from the writings of Ante Pavelić in exile after 1945. In his memoirs (written in hiding in Italy in 1947 and published in 1968), the former Poglavnik devoted a good deal of attention to Croatian ethnic history. According to Pavelić, the original Croats from White Croatia, who were possibly of Iranian or Gothic origin, had intermarried with the remnants of Slavs, Goths, Romans and (perhaps) Illyrians in their new Adriatic and Pannonian homeland.[6] The Croats assimilated all these peoples, and this showed 'the great strength and organisational and assimilatory power of the arriving Croats.' As a result of this admixture, a number of regional-racial types had emerged in Croatia over time.[7] Thus, one could observe 'Slavic characteristics, both bodily and spiritual', in northern Croatia; this region between the Sava and Drava Rivers was the home of the 'blond-haired type of the peaceful, agricultural Slavic element.'[8] Here Pavelić was referring to the East Baltic racial type, since that fair-haired type was considered to be the most widespread race among the Slavic nations (particularly the Poles and Russians).

On the other hand, in the Dinaric regions of Lika, the Dalmatian hinterland and Bosnia-Herzegovina one found 'the characteristics of the tall, organised, martial and authentic Croatian population of slighty darker hair.'[9] Although he did not explicitly name it, Pavelić was in this case clearly speaking of the Nordic-Dinaric racial type because he referred to the 'slighty darker hair' of these tall people in comparison to the blond (East Baltic) Slavs of north Croatia. Pavelić also noted the presence of the remnants of a 'typical Romanic population' in the southern Dalmatian hinterland (around the town of Imotski) where the people had preserved, to a considerable extent, the 'somatic and spiritual characteristics of the Romanic-Vlach population.'[10] Pavelić's post-war ethnographic-racial classification faithfully reflected the physical and psychological typology of traditional racial anthropology.[11]

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[6] Ante Pavelić, *Doživljaji I.* (Madrid: Domovina, 1968), 284.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., 284–285.
[11] As the son of parents from the mountainous region of Lika in Croatia, the Herzegovinian-born Pavelić no doubt considered himself to be a member of the 'tall,

Racial anthropology occupied a central place in the anti-Yugoslavist Croat discourse on national identity because it made a clear distinction between linguistic and racial identity. Indeed, one could argue that no other European nationalist movement—including even the National Socialists—had stressed the importance of this distinction to the same degree as the Ustasha movement. The Nazis had used racial anthropology primarily in order to justify the removal of German-speaking Jews (and other non-Aryans) from the already existing German *Volk*. The Ustashe had used racial anthropology mainly in order to prove the very existence of a separate Croatian *narod* and dispel the theory of a united ethnolinguistically Yugoslav people. This does not imply that the Ustashe did not consider language to be of great importance; the Slavic language of the Croats was, after all, a basic proof of their Indo-European or Aryan heritage.

Yet, race theory on its own could not ultimately provide a nation with a strong and stable sense of identity if it was not connected to an older ethnic or cultural tradition. The best case in point is Fascist Italy, where it was hard to bring Aryan race theory into line with the Mediterraneanist cultural-racial tradition.[12] In Germany, however, the Nordicist ideology of the late nineteenth century was able to attach itself to a long tradition—dating back to the period of German humanism—which extolled the idea of German racial autochthony, purity and excellence, especially in contrast to the decadent Romanic peoples of southern and western Europe.[13]

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organised, martial and authentic Croatian population.' But in the memoirs he wrote for the post-war Yugoslav authorities (while incarcerated in a communist jail before his execution in 1947), Slavko Kvaternik classified Pavelić, racially speaking, as 'a mixture of the Dinaric and Oriental types.' According to Kvaternik, Pavelić was an 'Asiatic' in both a physical and spiritual sense. This appeared to be confirmed, Kvaternik wrote, by the genealogical research of Pavelić's family, carried out by 'some Croatian and Slovakian priests', which had concluded that Pavelić was of Turkish descent. See Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika: Sjećanja Slavka Kvaternika* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1997), 162–163. In his memoirs Kvaternik wrote very critically of Pavelić and his dictatorial rule. Part of his hostility toward Pavelić was undoubtedly the result of his wartime personal feud with the Poglavnik. With the support of the Germans, Pavelić was able to force Kvaternik's resignation as Commander-in-chief of the Croatian army in late 1942. See Kisić Kolanović, *Vojskovođa i politika*, 56–62. The fact that Kvaternik chose to further discredit Pavelić through an unflattering racial description of him as a mixed Oriental-Asiatic, highlights the strong influence of racial theory on the mentality of leading Ustashe. Pavelić himself was actually the descendant of Catholic Vlachs (*Bunjevci*). See Magaš, *Croatia Through History*, 24fn, 674.

[12] Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, 10–34.

[13] Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 80–82. The humanist rediscovery of Tacitus' *Germania* 'highlighted for German authors the simple virtues and invincibility of their ancestors.' Namely, Tacitus had written that 'I accept the view that the peoples of Germany have never

According to the racial idea in the NDH, the Croats were a cultured warrior nation of Aryans. This racial idea was certainly based on specifically modern nationalist arguments (in turn based on modern historical and anthropological theories), but it was also based upon myth and tradition: the aristocratic Croat tradition of the conquering White Croat or Gothic-Slavic noble tribes arriving from the north to defeat the Avars in Dalmatia and Pannonia, as recounted in the three oldest sources of Croatian history (the accounts of Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the Priest of Dioclea and Thomas the Archdeacon of Split). Tradition—passed through the filter of modern nationalism—had thus provided the ideal Ustasha-Croatian man in the NDH with an ancestral role model, the Gothic-Slav warrior from White Croatia. In addition, the findings and theories of the modern sciences of archaeology, philology and racial anthropology were used selectively by nationalist intellectuals and race theorists in order to add the lofty Aryan Persian, and the hardy Dinaric Illyrian, to the Croat national genealogical tree.

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contaminated themselves by intermarriage with foreigners but remain of pure blood, distinct and unlike any other nation.' Cited in Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 80.

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